

Finnish Military Chaplains as Religious Experts in International Operations

Experiences from Lebanon and Afghanistan

Jaakko Pylvänäinen
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Tiivistelmä – Referat – Abstract <p>This study set out to examine and analyse Finnish military chaplains' and commanders' conceptions and experiences concerning the utilisation of Finnish military chaplains as religious experts – i.e. advising personnel on religion and culture and engaging local religious leaders and communities – in international military operations, with the focus on deployments to Lebanon and Afghanistan from 2010 to 2018. Simultaneously the study intended to contribute to the broader discussion on religious approaches and actors in conflict resolution, especially in the framework of comprehensive crisis management (CCM). This was done by conducting a qualitative content analysis on ten semi-structured interviews. The interviews were studied through a framework of religious approaches to conflict resolution, particularly the concepts of Religious Area Analysis (RAA) and Religious Leader Engagement (RLE) by Dr. Steve K. Moore and Religious Advicement (RA) and Religious Leader Engagement/Religious Leader Liaison (RLL) by Dr. Eric Patterson.</p> <p>It was found that Finnish military chaplains' RAA/RA and RLE/RLL endeavours in the two countries have been similar to their international counterparts' contributions in various operational environments, with the exception of no known successes of mediation, facilitation, or reconciliation between estranged local religious actors or communities – only some attempts in Lebanon. Although in the interviewees' cases RAA/RA and RLE/RLL efforts seem to have been limited mainly by external factors such as the level of willingness of locals, the security situation at hand, and the mandate and nature of each operation, the effect of individual and organisational issues was evident: to some extent, lack of full awareness and vision, insufficient policy and doctrine, limited training and instructions, inadequate planning and preparations, non-existent organisational frameworks, short rotations, and biased attitudes of personnel all have influenced Finnish chaplains' chances to serve their contingents in terms of local religious conditions and actors. In other words, these activities have not been conducted in a fully organised manner.</p> <p>The irregular state of RAA/RA and RLE/RLL in the Finnish Defence Forces has implications to the comprehensiveness of the organisation's conflict resolution efforts: if relevant expertise is not systematically used, opportunities will likely be missed and unnecessary mistakes made. Moreover, in light of theoretical understanding it may be stated that without a broader vision, longer-term planning, and increased commitment with respect to the approaches it will be very difficult, if not impossible, to connect the Finnish Defence Forces' international operations to any peacebuilding initiatives through local religious and traditional leaders – a strategy which has proven to be highly useful for Finnish peace mediation efforts.</p>		
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1. Introduction

Finland has, by the time of writing this thesis, developed its capacity in international peace mediation in a more systematic manner roughly for a decade (MFA 2017). In guidelines published in 2010 it was stated that '[p]eace mediation augments the range of instruments used in Finland's comprehensive crisis management efforts and development policy' (MFA 2010, 8). Interestingly, religious approaches have become an increasingly important component in the country's efforts to raise its effectiveness – and profile – in the mediation field. This can be seen, for instance, in the increased cooperation between the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland (MFA) and faith-based NGOs like Finn Church Aid (FCA) and the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Mission (Felm), let alone their contributions to international projects such as *the Network for Religious and Traditional Peacemakers* and *the Syria Initiative*. (MFA s.a., 2017, 2018.) However, there are no indications that the increased awareness and usage of religious approaches to conflict resolution would have translated into concrete actions within the military and civilian crisis management circles. Yet, maybe slightly surprisingly, there is a group of personnel within the Finnish Defence Forces (FDF) which has, already for decades, made efforts to support their troops in understanding and dealing with local religious elements and actors in international peacekeeping and crisis management operations. The attention is thus now drawn to the hitherto mostly unnoticed conflict resolution potential of Finnish military chaplains.

1.1 Aims and Objectives

The aim of this thesis is to introduce and analyse Finnish military chaplains' and commanders' conceptions and experiences concerning the utilisation of Finnish military chaplains as religious experts – i.e. advising personnel on religion and culture and engaging local religious leaders and communities – in international military operations. Although a few Finnish chaplains likely have gained some experience of such roles, as well as participated in humanitarian activities and other duties which concern local populations, in the Middle East already since the 1980s and in the Balkans since the 90s (see e.g. Helin 2008, 174–176), this study focuses on recent experiences from Lebanon and Afghanistan, where Finnish chaplains have been principally deployed during the second decade of the 21st century.¹ By doing so, it

¹ With the exceptions of at least Chad and Kosovo, where there were chaplains still in 2010 (Suomen evankelis-luterilainen kirkko 2011), before the Finns withdrew from the operations the same year (YLE 2010a, 2010b), and the coast of Somalia, where there was a chaplain on board of a Finnish warship in 2011 (Pesonen 2016).

is intended to provide the freshest insights into the phenomenon, hopefully serving those who engage in this field in the near future, whether it be researchers or practitioners.

The topic is timely and relevant for multiple reasons. Already for many years Finnish peacekeepers have served in areas of operation (AO) where religious elements have been a significant factor in conflicts. The ability to understand these elements and to respond to them accordingly has had direct effects on the troops' chances to build trust and settle disputes constructively with local populations. As implied above, at times Finnish chaplains have been able to support their troops in doing this, but these cases have been left unstudied so far. As it seems probable that religious elements continue to be a significant factor in future conflicts as well, investigating Finnish military chaplains' endeavours has a practical aspect: if the dynamics of religion and conflict are better understood and relevant expertise more efficiently utilised, it might help Finnish peacekeepers to address conflicts more comprehensively in the operations to come.

In academia religion and conflict resolution have been an object of increased interest since the 90s, raising truly into prominence in the beginning of the millennium. For instance, in an article called *Faith-Based Diplomacy and Preventive Engagement* (2003) Douglas Johnston and Brian Cox discussed the need for new practical approaches which take religion into account. They called for more attention and research on the topic and argued for the integration of religious experts – military chaplains included – into various conflict resolution activities. They asserted that even if religion was not the main factor in some of the contemporary conflicts, it may still need to be considered in order to achieve more durable results. (Johnston & Cox 2003, 11–26.)

Since then such practical applications have been developed: Religious Area Analysis (RAA) and Religious Leader Engagement (RLE) are introduced by Dr. Steve K. Moore in his book called *Military Chaplains as Agents of Peace: Religious Leader Engagement in Conflict and Post-Conflict Environments* (2013). Similar concepts called Religious Advicement (RA) and Religious Leader Engagement/Religious Leader Liaison (RLL) are presented in a publication, edited by Dr. Eric Patterson, called *Military Chaplains in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Beyond: Advicement and Leader Engagement in Highly Religious Environments* (2014). To clarify the concepts briefly at this point, the purpose of RAA/RA is to provide relevant information about the religious environment within a given AO for decision making purposes (Moore 2013, 98; Patterson 2014, 14–15, 19), while the aim of RLE/RLL is to build peaceful relations with local populations and support positive interaction between conflicting parties by encountering local religious leaders (Moore 2013, 2, 293; Patterson 2014, 14, 19).

The primary data of this research concerning Finnish military chaplains' involvement in RAA/RA and RLE/RLL activities consists of ten semi-structured interviews. The study participants included six former military chaplains and four former commanders of Finnish contingents. Half of them, three of the military chaplains and two of the commanders, were interviewed due to their experience from Lebanon, and the other half of them, likewise three military chaplains and two commanders, due to their experience from Afghanistan.

By conducting a qualitative content analysis on their interview contributions, I aim to answer the following research questions: **First, how do Finnish military chaplains and commanders perceive the utilisation of Finnish military chaplains 1) as advisors for the command and other personnel in regard to religious elements and their effects in areas of operation and 2) as liaison personnel between Finnish contingents and local religious leaders and communities? Second, what sort of experiences do they have of such endeavours from the Finnish Defence Forces' international operations in Lebanon and Afghanistan since the year of 2010?** Simultaneously the study intends to contribute to the broader discussion on religious approaches and actors in conflict resolution, especially in the framework of comprehensive crisis management (CCM).

Beyond increasing knowledge, the study intends to raise awareness concerning the topic. The motivation for this stems from my previous studies and limited work experience in conflict resolution. Based on my preliminary understanding I found it probable that, although by no means completely ignored, religious elements may not always be dealt with in a fully analytic manner by conflict resolution actors and organisations. The thematic is challenging – and divisive – even for notable scholars (see e.g. Atran 2010; Appleby 2015; Omer 2015; Dawson 2017). Therefore, rather than simply describing the phenomenon, I also hope to pinpoint some of the factors which may influence the utilisation of religious expertise, in this case within the FDF. Although unlikely that such a limited study like this would have much impact in terms of development, should some issues be revealed, I do hope it could serve as an inspirator for new ideas and more thorough examinations.

In the following paragraphs I illustrate the broader societal relevance of the study by explaining how RAA/RA and RLE/RLL situate conceptually into the frameworks of military operations and the comprehensive approach (CA), and by assessing how religion has been considered in the context of CCM in Finland. In the second chapter, which aims at presenting the background and context of this study, I introduce the Finnish Military Chaplaincy's contributions to international operations, FDF's participation in the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), and FDF's contributions to the International Security Assistance

Force (ISAF) and the operation Resolute Support (RS) in Afghanistan. In the third chapter I first introduce the scholarly history of Religion and Conflict Resolution and then outline the theoretical framework of the study. The starting points and preconditions of the study, the data collection process, the analysis of the data, and the discussion concerning the reliability, validity, and generalisability of the study are presented in detail in the fourth chapter. The fifth and the sixth chapter are dedicated to the analysis. Finally, I summarise the study findings and discuss the potential for further research in the last chapter.

1.2 Operational Military Chaplains – An Emerging Capacity of Peacekeeping and Crisis Management Forces?

In military terms RLE (/RLL) fits into the category of Key Leader Engagement (KLE)², the practice of deliberately meeting with people of influence with the aim of creating effects which support the realisation of mission objectives. Some religious leaders possess notable capacity to shape public opinion and will of local populations, and thus count as such people. Moore argues that engaging and building relationships with these leaders in accordance with the principles of RLE could prove to be of strategic importance due to the potential it has for fostering stability in the given AO. (Moore 2013, 106.)³ Concerning another way for armed forces to engage with locals, CIMIC (Civilian Military Cooperation)⁴, which often manifests as development projects, Moore writes that it has a potential interface with RLE and argues that these initiatives could be seen as complementary with each other's (Moore 2013, 241).

Although not being new ideas in Finland either (see e.g. Helin 2008), conceptually Moore takes them some steps further. Regarding the broader framework, he situates the conflict resolution and humanitarian activities of military chaplains into the context of the comprehensive approach (CA), i.e. the coordination of efforts of different actors – military, government, and civilian – towards a common goal. The increased complexity of modern conflicts, which are often of intrastate nature and contain insurgency elements, has forced national and international organisations to look for better integrated strategies to deal with the various root causes of conflicts more efficiently. For Moore the main question in all of this is how RLE could support various conflict resolution and other organisations with relation to affected societies' religious actors prominent at communal, regional, and national levels. (Moore 2013, 1–10.)

² For more on Key Leader Engagement, see e.g. Hull 2009.

³ Hirvelä and Huhtinen (2013) write about the increased strategic and operative level significance of KLE activities as a part of strategic communication of state actors.

⁴ For more on Finnish CIMIC endeavours, see e.g. Holma 2018.

In Moore's vision, chaplains would work as interfaces between their own troops, government departments and agencies, local religious leaders and communities, NGOs, and even indigenous peace endeavours. By doing so chaplains could support them in reaching higher levels of interoperability in accordance with the principles of the CA. (Moore 2013, 250–253.) He argues that RLE could create conflict resolution opportunities which would be otherwise missed (Moore 2013, 103, 110), but maintains that chaplains should focus mainly on initiating the processes, working as facilitators who bring relevant actors together:

In bringing RLE forward, the intention has never been to make conflict resolution experts out of chaplains. Aiding in resolving the conflict, as a facilitator, is a more accurate depiction of the chaplains – staying in their own lane. Where RLE *ministry* brings religious leaders from estranged identity-groups together, the long view maintains placing such initiatives in the hands of those with the expertise in peacebuilding – indigenous to the local population if at all possible. (Moore 2013, 256.)

Moore finds that, in an ideal case, chaplains would be connected to suitable peacebuilding actors already before their deployments so that these actors could be easily called to aid during operations if needed. At other times, when local structures of peacebuilding already exist, chaplains could facilitate support for them, if the situation allows. (Moore 2013, 256.)

John Paul Lederach's *Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies* (2013), first published in 1997, is one of the earlier conceptual explorations on the integration of various conflict resolution activities and actors – the religious ones included. However, the development of the CA in military context started gaining wider traction only after the Riga Summit of 2006 as NATO's experiences from Afghanistan, Balkans, and – although mainly outside the Alliance's framework – Iraq had proven that it needed to enhance its conflict resolution capabilities. Even if there has been a wide consensus of the need for the CA in multinational organisations, such as NATO and the EU, from early on, initially its development and implementation was slow due to political and organisational obstacles. However, individual countries like Denmark, which started pushing the CA to the agenda of NATO already in the end of 2004, took significant steps at the national level from early on. (Petersen & al. 2010, 75–80; Pirozzi 2013.)

Since then there has been progress within NATO, the UN, the OSCE, the EU, and some African organisations, although challenges remain (Puolustusvoimat 2018, 71). As to the potential of chaplains and their religious expertise within the CA framework, it was considered already in 2011 – in an article by Moore – in the book called *Security Operations in the 21st Century: Canadian Perspectives on the Comprehensive Approach* (2011), edited by Michael Rostek and Peter Gizewski. However, it looks like the integration of religious approaches to conflict resolution within the CA framework has been very limited, if not non-existent, in any of the international organisations and even individual countries.

1.3 Religion and Comprehensive Crisis Management in Finland

In Finland, a country which can be argued as having been at the forefront of development of the CA, or comprehensive crisis management (CCM)⁵, similar considerations to military chaplains' potential in conflict resolution have not been given. In general, the interest in religion has been quite limited in the Finnish research of CCM. This trend can be seen, for instance, in the publications of Wider Security Network and its predecessor (WISE – previously known as KATU)⁶.

In *Siviilit kriisejä hallitsemassa – Matkalla kokonaisvaltaiseen kriisinhallintaan* (Civilians Managing Crises – On the Way to Comprehensive Crisis Management, Kopola & Palm 2012 – translation J.P) religion is merely a side issue noted in a couple of articles, but its engagement is not explored at all. In *Rauhanvälitys – suomalaisia näkökulmia* (Peace mediation – Finnish Perspectives, Siirtola & Palm 2014 – translation J.P) the work of FCA and Felm, along with the peacebuilding capacity of local religious leaders, is introduced (see Nissinen 2014; Rytönen 2014; Rintakoski 2014), but the ideas how to conceptually and practically integrate these actors' efforts to the broader framework of CCM remain absent. Similarly, in *Yhdessä enemmän – Kriisien hallintaa kokonaisvaltaisesti* (More Together – Managing Crises Comprehensively, Siirtola & Palm 2018 – translation J.P) religious aspects receive some attention, but the contributions are not significant. Laura Lindgren from the MFA highlights Finland's role and expertise in faith-based conflict resolution and notes that the MFA supports mediation work of actors like FCA and Felm (Lindgren 2018, 121–122). Outi Hakkarainen tells about *the Syria Initiative* of Felm, which has been Finland's biggest operative peacebuilding project (Hakkarainen 2018, 140–144). Yet, both note that there is still room for improvement in the cooperation of governmental and civil society actors. Arto Mutanen has another focus and his remarks about religion concern the importance of understanding symbolical meanings in dialogue processes (Mutanen 2018, 164–165).

In some other publications cultural awareness and communication competence come up when the question of improving Finnish conflict resolution actors' ability to deal with local populations is studied (see e.g. Ådahl 2009). In her doctoral dissertation *Enhancing Human Security Through Crisis Management – Opportunities and Challenges for Learning* Ulla

⁵ The Finnish Centre of Expertise in Comprehensive Crisis Management, a framework for cooperative between the Crisis Management Centre Finland (CMC Finland) and the Finnish Defence Forces International Centre (FINCENT), was founded in 2008 (see e.g. Kerkkänen 2015, 35), and the country has had a strategy for comprehensive crisis management – the Finnish version of CA – since 2009 (see e.g. Häikiö 2018, 153).

⁶ 'Wider Security Network (WISE) is a civil society network established in October 2015 that brings together Finnish NGOs and parliamentary groups, to work together to promote peacebuilding, crisis management and conflict prevention both nationally and internationally.' (WISE website.)

Anttila argues that these skills help getting locals involved in peace processes and contribute to human security (Anttila 2012, 183). Religion and its role in conflicts – and possibly in their resolution – is noted specifically in Reijo E. Heinonen's article *Bridging the Gap of Understanding: Dialogue Competence in the Renewal of UN Peacekeeping and Civil Crisis Management* (2017). He explores the challenge of establishing constructive interaction with and between alienated religious and sectarian groups in a way that it would support conflict resolution in peacekeeping and civilian crisis management settings. He maintains that more focus must be laid on the quality of the communications skills which are required in missions. In his article he divides dialogue competence into three elements:

[D]ialogue rules based on knowledge of religions and cultures; second, a system of symbol theory based on the abstraction level of the concepts, which can be comprehended dependently of their context. The third element of the dialogue competence is the awareness of the combining universal ethical principles and norms (global ethic), which can connect people and create mutual understanding. This element of dialogue competence is necessary also for readiness to embrace openness and for ability to change one's attitudes, worldview, and values. (Heinonen 2017, 65.)

As to considerations for practical applications, the situation looks even scarcer. The potential of religious leaders is discussed in an article called *Multi-Tracking Peacebuilding – Adding Mediation and Transformative Dialogue to Civilian Crisis Management* (2012) as Pirjo Jukarainen 'plays with the idea' of the EU cooperating with Afghan religious leaders in the questions of rule-of-law and women's human rights. All in all, the lack of research and explorations on the topic seems striking when one thinks of 'Finland's CCM strategy' from the year 2009. In it 'dialogue between cultures and religions' was defined as one of the cross-cutting themes in crisis management, and the need for paying attention to local religions, cultures, and values is brought up in the context of the training of crisis management personnel (Suomen kokonaisvaltainen kriisinhallintastrategia 2009, 21, 29, 51). I would assess it being likely that there are gaps not only in research, but also in implementation.

Obviously, neither Moore's visions nor Finnish military chaplains' potential role in conflict resolution can be taken for granted. Still, due to the growing need to consider and address local religious – and cultural – conditions in peacekeeping and crisis management settings it would seem reasonable to suppose that the knowledge and experience of those Finnish military chaplains who have served in international operations could be of use. After all, they are possibly, first, among the most educated peacekeepers when it comes to academic studies of religion; second, open and used to consider and reflect issues such as symbolical language, ethics, values, worldviews, and the like which Heinonen (2018) argues to be of importance in the process of dialogue with local populations; and third, already experienced when it comes to encounters with indigenous religious leaders and actors. Hence, this study.

2. Background and Context

This chapter serves as a background and context for my study, as in it I introduce briefly the Finnish Military Chaplaincy's involvement in international operations, the Finnish Defence Forces' (FDF) participation in the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), and the FDF's contributions to the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) and the operation Resolute Support (RS) in Afghanistan. Unfortunately, there is very limited amount of material available about the topics, but I believe that it is possible to provide a general picture of them. In the first part of the chapter I am relying heavily on Juha Poteri's research (2018), which presents the history of Finnish Military Chaplaincy, and on Seppo Kangas' doctoral dissertation (1999), which looks at the FDF's ecclesial work in the United Nations Disengagement Observation Force (UNDOF) in Golan from 1979 until 1993. Concerning the latter parts of this chapter, I rely mainly on two recent publications which present the history of Finnish peacekeeping and crisis management: an article by Kalle Liesinen's (2018a) and a book by Heikki Holma and Juha Jalkanen (2018) – Holma being the chief editor of the publication.

2.1 Finnish Military Chaplaincy and International Operations

Finnish military chaplains have a long and rather international history. A Finnish Priest called Pietari Kaukovalta is known to have served German crusaders in the Baltics in the beginning of the 13th century. Since the 16th century, during the Swedish rule, there were Finnish military chaplains serving in the Swedish Army. The change to the Russian rule in 1809 did not initially affect the situation of Finnish chaplains much, and they continued serving as usual. Only when the Finnish Army was dissolved in 1905, so was the Chaplaincy. (Poteri 2018, 9–10, 14.) The history of the Military Chaplaincy of independent Finland goes back to the year 1918 when it was reorganised amid the Finnish Civil War. (Poteri 2018, 28–33.) Less than 50 official military chaplains served in the Civil War, but in the wars of 1939–1944 with the Soviet Union the number was almost 900 military chaplains (Poteri 2018, 24, 83, 109; Niskanen & al. 2004, 184). After the World War II it did not take long that Finnish military chaplains would see conflict zones again, although in a much smaller scale, this time the context being peacekeeping operations further away from home.

The first Finnish company to serve in a United Nations peacekeeping mission was sent to Suez in 1956 (First United Nations Emergency Force, UNEF I). Initially the troops did not get a chaplain with, but Chaplain Olavi Ojala visited them for a week in the spring of 1957 and was reportedly well-received by the peacekeepers. When the troops rotated in the summer

the same year, a chaplain was added to the unit's strength. Thus, the first Finnish military chaplain deployed to an international peacekeeping mission was Pastor Toivo Kuusiola from the Parish of Jalasjärvi. As to his duties, he was responsible for organising church services, devotions, teaching activities, distribution of information, and personal counselling opportunities for the troops. (Poteri 2018, 201; see also Liesinen 2018a, 448.)

When a Finnish peacekeeping battalion was deployed to Cyprus (United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus, UNFICYP) almost a decade later in 1964, a chaplain was deployed with them. Within a couple of years, the chaplain's role became a consolidated part of the peacekeeping organisation. The exact content of the chaplain's work was dependent on the visions of the commanding officer and the chaplain himself, but it may be said that it consisted of two main elements expressed explicitly in 1967: 1) church services and 2) counselling, teaching and leisure activities. It was also defined that the purpose of the chaplain in peacekeeping operations was to serve Finnish UN troops by providing them possibilities to receive the sacraments and to hear the word of God so that they may feel connected to the Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Finland and receive the spiritual care it provides. Accordingly, regular church services and a communion once a month created the basis for the chaplain's work. In addition to that evening devotions and Sunday devotions were common. Counselling sessions could be held practically anywhere, as the chaplain visited personnel at different places: in guard posts, detentions, hospitals, recreational facilities, and so forth. Peacekeepers could also visit the chaplain in his office or accommodation, or they might have a word with him during recreational activities. The chaplain was a listener, mediator, advisor, and counsellor in various matters. When it comes to teaching activities, it is mentioned in Poteri's research that the chaplain organised lectures and small introductions on topics such as local church history, the UN Declaration of Human Rights, and ethical leadership. (Poteri 2018, 201–202, 218.)

By 1977, during the first 20 years of the Finnish Military Chaplaincy's involvement in the FDF's international operations, 26 chaplains had served in Cyprus and 12 in the Middle East. In addition to that the Chaplaincy had started building connections to other Military Chaplaincies in Europe, the United States, and Canada in the 1970s. (Poteri 2018, 222–223.) In the following years the Chaplaincy's involvement in the UN missions continued as usual. As in the previous years, the focus of the chaplain's work was on preaching, teaching, and counselling among the troops. Some changes did take place though: Finnish military deacons were deployed abroad for the first time in 1978 and new areas of operation were introduced. The troops in Sinai were transferred to Golan (UNDOF) in 1979 and a battalion was deployed

to Lebanon (UNIFIL) in 1982. Finnish chaplains and deacons naturally went where their troops did. (Poteri 2018, 230, 233, 240; Holma & Jalkanen 2018, 106.)

Based on the research of Seppo Kangas it can be said that at the latest by 1988 the chaplains serving in UNDOF, in addition to other duties, were explicitly tasked to provide lectures on local religions. The challenge was, and not only regarding the knowledge of the local religious conditions, that no task-specific training was provided for the chaplains in the Pre-Deployment Training (PDT) before the operation. Only during the induction training in the AO, when the troops rotated, the UNDOF chaplains were briefed by their predecessors, but this period of one or two weeks was considered too short for gaining enough knowledge about the region, unless the new chaplain had previous knowledge of the history, religions, and cultures of the Middle East. Other peacekeepers whom Kangas interviewed in the autumn of 1993 felt they had had the same problem, for before the operation they had not received proper training on the local conditions either. (Kangas 1999, 144–145, 150–151.) Similar challenges have been brought up in research concerning more recent operations also (see e.g. Anttila 2012; Kivistö 2016).

In UNDOF the chaplain's lectures on local religions, cultures, and history, which were dependant on the chaplain's activeness and voluntary for the personnel, were seen as having a very important role in shedding light to various phenomena which the troops faced daily. The UNDOF chaplains' reports from the years of 1979–1993 reveal that during the 14 years the 13 chaplains who served in the operation held 239 such lectures. Those who had previous experience from the region held more lectures than the rest. Unfortunately, there are no statistics on how many of the 5973 Finnish peacekeepers who served in the operation participated in the lectures. In the reports it is merely mentioned that the lectures were popular. In addition to the lectures, the relevant expertise of these chaplains was utilised in the planning of the so-called chaplain's trips. Even though the main aspect of the trips might have been recreational, they had an educational aspect also, for they provided the peacekeepers possibilities to learn more about the local conditions and culture. As many of the places visited were familiar from the Bible, the chaplain was usually considered the most suitable person to organise them. During 1979–1993 the troops did 356 such trips with 6586 persons participating in them. (Kangas 1999, 118, 170–173, 279.)

Chaplain Lauri Salminen who served in Satakunnan Tykistörykmentti (The Artillery Regiment of Satakunta – translation J.P) in Niinisalo in 1991–2001 was involved in the training activities of the United Nations Training Centre located in the same garrison. The centre was providing training for Finnish peacekeepers preparing for future operations, as

well as organising courses for international students sent in by different countries. Eventually Chaplain Salminen became responsible for organising training on religions, cultures, and traditions of areas of operation for Finnish troops. In addition to that he gave task-specific instructions for chaplains and deacons before their deployments. (Poteri 2018, 279–280.) Initially there seems to have been challenges, for even though according to official guidelines from the Defence Command the chaplain of Tykistörykmentti was responsible for the training related to the chaplain's tasks in operations, in an interview with Kangas in 1994 Chaplain Salminen expressed that the training he had provided was not the result of demands from the UN Training Centre but his voluntary contribution. He had not been asked to provide any lectures for the troops and the instructions he gave for the chaplains had concerned ecclesial duties mainly. (Kangas 1999, 151.)

By the year 2000 more than 100 Finnish military chaplains had served in international peacekeeping and crisis management operations (Niskanen & al. 2004, 187). In addition to organising ecclesial work, counselling, and leisure activities some of them had supported their troops with their religious expertise through lectures and chaplain's trips at least, as well as established a proven track record in humanitarian and CIMIC duties (Helin 2008, 169, 174–175). Since the year 2000, approximately 50 Finnish military chaplains have served in Afghanistan, Bosnia, Eritrea, Kosovo, Lebanon, Chad, and at the coast of Somalia.⁷ It seems that at the turn of the millennium two additional aspects of the Finnish chaplain's work started to become increasingly notable. Some hints in different sources suggest that Finnish chaplains, similarly to their colleagues of other nationalities, have advised their commanders and personnel about religious and cultural issues and encountered local religious leaders and communities in various settings. (See e.g. Helin 2008; Riikonen 2008; Ala-Kärppä 2011; Puolustusvoimat 2012; Rytönen 2015.)

Despite the Finnish Military Chaplaincy's involvement in international operations from very early on there has been limited official guidelines for the chaplains serving in them. This is evident in the newer documents also. For instance, only a small chapter on international operations was added to the updated *Kirkollisen työn ohjesääntö* (Guidelines for Ecclesial Duties – translation J.P) in 2003. Still, in spite of the brevity of the chapter, the expertise of the chaplain was noted in it. According to the document, chaplains and deacons are to participate in organising cultural and educational activities, as well as recreational trips – the so-called chaplain's trips – in the AO. The idea of the trips was described to aim at supporting

⁷ Information confirmed by Senior Chaplain Janne Aalto from the Finnish Defence Forces Defence Command per email on 13 March 2019.

the well-being of the troops and to familiarise them with local culture and circumstances. (Poteri 2018, 264–266.) The newer roles were noted too. Concerning activities outside the context of the chaplain's own troops it was defined that 'the chaplain keeps in touch with chaplains of the other countries participating in the crisis management operation, and, wherever possible, with local religious leaders. Similarly, ecclesial personnel contribute to humanitarian activities, if possible.' (Poteri 2018, 266 – translation J.P.)

Sotilaspapiston opas (Chaplaincy Guidelines – translation J.P) published in April 2017 is, as its predecessor, quite limited concerning the chaplain's duties in international operations. The first six paragraphs of the chapter named *Kansainvälinen kriisinhallinta* (International Crisis Management – translation J.P) – which contains less than two pages of text – rather deal with issues such as when a chaplain is deployed with the troops, how he is being recruited and trained, and what requirements he must fulfil, than the duties he ought to carry out. The last six paragraphs provide some guidance for his duties. (Sotilaspapiston opas 2017, 13–14.) Concerning the engagement with local religious leaders, it is merely noted that the chaplain serving in international operations, among other duties, keeps in touch with local religious leaders. This is done in accordance with the commander's intent and a NATO annex 'Chaplaincy Guidelines for Religious Ministry and Chaplains Co-operation in a Multinational Environment'. (Sotilaspapiston opas 2017, 14, 22–25.) It must be noted that this annex focuses solely on cooperation with other chaplains, not on engagement with local religious leaders, even if some of its basic principles may be applicable in that domain too. Advisement on religious matters in operations is not mentioned in the chapter. In another chapter named *Puolustusvoimien henkilöstön toimintakyvyn tukeminen* (The Support of the Capacity of the Defence Forces' Personnel – translation J.P) it has been merely stated that:

A military chaplain, by his educations, is an expert of religions. Individuals' personal religious persuasions influence the troops' course of action. This becomes especially apparent in the work of military chaplains serving in crisis management operations. (Sotilaspapiston opas 2017, 12 – translation J.P.)

2.2 Finnish Peacekeeping in Lebanon

The United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) has had its presence in Lebanon since 1978. In the beginning of 2018, there were still some 11300 peacekeepers in the operation, as well as 325 field service personnel and 579 local workers. Throughout the years 312 people have lost their lives while serving in the operation. (Holma & Jalkanen 2018, 115.)

By the mid-1970s the situation in Lebanon had gotten out of control. The influx of Palestinian refugees, the attacks of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) against Israel

from the Lebanese soil, the civil war which erupted in 1975, and the Syrian intervention in 1976 caused the country to fall into a chaos. Furthermore, as a response to the continuous PLO attacks the Israel Defence Forces (IDF) crossed the border in March 1978. Within a week the IDF had control over Southern Lebanon, except for the city of Tyre, all the way to the Litani river. A few days after the Israeli intrusion UNIFIL was established by the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) Resolution 426/1978. Its assignment was to monitor the IDF troops' withdrawal from Lebanon, restore peace and security in Southern Lebanon, and assist the Lebanese government to regain its control over the area. Initially the operation was given a mandate of six months and its strength was defined between 4000 and 6000 peacekeepers. The first UNIFIL peacekeepers arrived in Southern Lebanon already in the end of March 1978. Finland was involved in the operation from early on, as General Lieutenant Ensio Siilasvuo, then-Chief Coordinator of the UN peacekeeping activities in the Middle East, oversaw the negotiations between the conflicting parties. (Holma & Jalkanen 2018, 102–103.)

The IDF withdrew from Southern Lebanon by May 1978, but the situation in the region did not calm down. The subsequent four years witnessed fighting between the Israelis and the Palestinians, and between armed Lebanese factions, the PLO, and the UNIFIL troops. Some of the incidents were very dangerous. De Facto Force (DDF, later known as the South Lebanese Army, SLA) attacked the UNIFIL Headquarters in Naqoura in April 1980. In total 86 shells of various kinds hit the camp. PLO rockets launched to Israel in July 1981 resulted an Israeli aerial bombardment in the AO of UNIFIL and an intense exchange of artillery fire for two weeks, but Israel refrained from greater land operations for the time being. A ceasefire demanded by the UN came into effect later in July 1981. As the ceasefire did not last the IDF launched the operation Peace for Galilee in June 1982 with about 90000 soldiers participating in the attack. The PLO fighters were pushed all the way to Beirut and forced to leave the country. (Holma & Jalkanen 2018, 103–105; Liesinen 2018a, 454–455.)

Finland deployed troops to Southern Lebanon for the first time in 1982. By 10 December all the 460 peacekeepers had reached the country. (Holma & Jalkanen 2018, 106.) At that time Israel was still occupying areas as far as the outskirts of Beirut (Liesinen 2018a, 455). After series of negotiations Israel gradually withdrew its troops from the Northern side of the Litani river until the withdrawal was complete on 29 April 1985 (Holma & Jalkanen 2018, 107). In addition to more traditional soldiering the Finnish peacekeepers provided significant support for the Lebanese civilian population by organising medical services, protecting farmers, and distributing educational material. Moreover, the construction of local waste management infrastructure was launched with Finnish development aid. Partly this had

to do with the Force Protection of the troops, for it was understood that in order to fulfil the mission it was vital to build and maintain good relations and cooperation with the local population. (Holma 2018, 76.)

In the 80s and 90s Finnish peacekeepers experienced a lot of action in Lebanon. In 1985 some SLA fighters took 25 Finns as hostages. The situation was resolved with the help of political pressure and without casualties. In 1987 Hezbollah fighters, after a failed attack against IDF and SLA positions, took some Finnish peacekeepers – serving in a near-by guard post – as hostages. They used the peacekeepers as human shields, took over the Finnish base 9-36, and looted the base. After the incident, and further accusations and demands from Hezbollah, the Finnish Force Commander of UNIFIL Gustav Hägglund met with the Hezbollah leadership in Beirut – without the permission from the UN Headquarters in New York – and was able to calm the situation down. In July 1988 a Finnish PASI (Armoured Personnel Carrier) was hit by a mine, but there were no casualties. In November 1988 a small group of PLO fighters took over the pumping station 9-47A and again some Finns were taken as hostages. Eventually the peacekeepers managed to overpower the kidnappers, but a local worker got killed as a gun was accidentally fired amid the struggle. (Holma & Jalkanen 2018, 107–111; Liesinen 2018a, 456–457.)

In August 1993 the IDF launched an attack named Operation Accountability as a response for intensified activities of local resistance fighters. Artillery fire and aerial bombardments hit the surroundings of the Finnish bases several times during the next week. Over 20000 projectiles were fired into the AO of UNIFIL and about 200000 people left the region. The next major artillery campaign, called the Grapes of Wrath, took place in April 1996. Again, the massive shelling caused considerable threats to the Finns also. The situation stayed volatile throughout the end of the 90s, but nonetheless the IDF withdrew from Lebanon in May 2000. Finland pulled out its peacekeepers in October 2001. During the 19 years of peacekeeping in Lebanon more than 11400 Finns served in the country. Of them, 11 lost their lives. (Holma & Jalkanen 2018, 107–112; Liesinen 2018a, 456–458.)

The positive developments in Southern Lebanon did not last for long. In July 2006 Hezbollah launched rockets to Israel, captured two the IDF soldiers from the Israeli side of the Blue Line, and killed three others. Israel retaliated by deploying troops to Lebanon and bombarding the country. The 12th Finnish peacekeeper to die in the country was Captain Jarno Mäkinen who was serving there as a military observer. The UN base in Khiam where he was carrying out his duties was fully destroyed by an Israeli aerial bombardment. (Liesinen 2018a, 458.) After a month of fighting between Hezbollah and Israel the UNSC passed on the

Resolution 1701/2006 which called for the immediate cessation of hostilities. It was decided that the amount of UNIFIL troops will be increased from 2000 to 15000 soldiers, and that a sea component will be added to the operation. (Holma & Jalkanen 2018, 113.) In addition to that the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) was given the responsibility over Southern Lebanon (Liesinen 2018, 458).

As an aftermath of the July War Finland, among other countries, decided to deploy troops to Lebanon. A pioneer company with some staff officers reached Lebanon in the end of 2006. This time the Finns served as a part of the Irish-Finnish Battalion (IRISHFINBATT) only until the end of 2007. In total 297 Finnish peacekeepers served in Lebanon during that period. While after the 2006 war Southern Lebanon has stayed relatively calm, the situation in Syria has influenced the region and made threat analysis more difficult. As it is well known, the Arab Spring inspired protests in Lebanon's neighbouring country in 2011 soon turned into a full-scale civil war. It has been estimated that due to the Syrian Civil War the situation could have changed rapidly in Lebanon as well. (Holma & Jalkanen 2018, 114.) For instance, even though Hezbollah, the power player in Southern Lebanon, has been highly engaged in its attempts of aiding the Syrian regime, moving its focus away from Southern Lebanon and the border with Israel, its entanglement in the Civil War since 2011 has increased sectarian and political tensions within and without Lebanon (see e.g. Daher 2016, 179–197).

Finland returned to UNIFIL with 200 peacekeepers in May 2012. The main reasons behind the deployment might have been political as Finland was applying to become one of the UNSC Non-Permanent Members at the time. The Finns served again under the Irish command in IRISHFINBATT. The Irish lead lasted until November 2013 when Finland became the lead nation of the battalion. The number of Finnish peacekeepers was raised to 350 and the battalion was renamed as the Finnish-Irish Battalion (FINIRISHBATT). (Holma & Jalkanen 2018, 114.) The lead was given back to Ireland again in November 2016, and the number of Finnish troops was decreased to 150 personnel. The number of troops was kept at that level only until March 2017 when Finland deployed a jaeger company to be a part of the French-led Force Commander's Reserve battalion (FCR). This increased the number of troops to around 330 personnel. (Liesinen 2018a, 458.) In November 2018 Finland withdrew its troops from the IRISHFINBATT and has continued to contribute in UNIFIL with approximately 200 peacekeepers serving in FCR. In addition to monitoring and patrolling, the Finnish troops have participated in CIMIC activities and cooperated with the LAF in the form of joint operations and provision of training. (Army newsheet 2019.)

Even if UNIFIL has been rather deadly for Finnish peacekeepers, it looks like in the recent years the levels of threat and hostility in this more traditional peacekeeping operation have been of fully different scale than in the crisis management efforts in Afghanistan – where the overall death toll of international troops during ISAF has been over ten times higher than that of UNIFIL.

2.3 Finnish Crisis Management in Afghanistan

The International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) was present in Afghanistan for a bit over 13 years, starting in the end of 2001. More than 3500 soldiers died serving in ISAF. It has been estimated, that between 25000 and 40000 civilians died during the operation. Since the beginning of 2015 the international presence has continued in the country with the operation called Resolute Support (RS). (Holma & Jalkanen 2018, 125, 129, 133.) The initial intervention developed into a longer-than-expected war (Byman 2018).

Soon after the events of 11 September 2001, the United States deployed troops to Afghanistan. The troops, which reached the country already on 7 October, had clear objectives: the destruction of the Taliban as an organisation and the capture of the leader of Al-Qaida, Osama bin Laden – dead or alive. The operation was named Enduring Freedom (OEF) and was based on the earlier UN Security Council Resolutions from the years of 1999 and 2000. By mid-December 2001 the US and their allies had taken over Kabul. Later the same month the UNSC passed on the Resolution 1386 which mandated the international community to form ISAF. Initially the mandate covered Kabul and the surrounding areas, but already in October 2003 it was expanded to cover all Afghanistan. (Holma & Jalkanen 2018, 25, 59–60, 125–126; Liesinen 2018a, 465–467.)

As the operation expanded so did the amount of troops. In 2006 there were 12400 personnel in ISAF. By the summer of 2008 the number had increased gradually to approximately 52700. In 2011 there were already some 140000 personnel serving in 28 Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) -areas. (Holma & Jalkanen 2018, 127.) It may be well argued that the increase in the number of US and other troops coupled with conqueror attitude, lack of understanding of the local context⁸, counterproductive policies, and poor choices of tactics on the ground, as well as the corrupt Afghan government's inability to address issues, did not lead to any breakthroughs but rather ever increasingly deteriorated the security situation in the country. In addition to this both Al Qaeda and the Taliban were able

⁸ For example, only at the turn of 2009–2010 did the US Central Command start paying attention to those religious leaders within and without Afghanistan who were influencing in the country's religious dynamics (see West 2014, 120– 121).

to win the hearts and the minds of the local population more efficiently than the foreign coalition – which was causing a significant number of civilian casualties. The alienated tribes started perceiving the extremist organisations as more and more viable allies to whom to turn to. (See e.g. Atran 2010, 254–267; Hirvelä & Huhtinen 2013, 14; West 2014, 120.) As Scott Atran puts it somewhat provocatively: ‘almost no Afghans were closely associated with Al Qaeda until after 9/11, when America bombed them into togetherness’ (Atran 2010, 99). The campaign and the motives to participate in it have raised controversy in Finland also. For instance, the question if one can speak of crisis management anymore when one is involved in the war efforts of the US – especially if it was mainly for political reasons – is relevant. Besides, the limited provision of information concerning the Finnish troops participation in combat activities has been highly criticised. There are likely still many difficult questions to be sorted out. (Byman 2018.)

In July 2011 the US announced the withdrawal of troops from Afghanistan, and NATO handed over the responsibility for security to local security forces in June 2013 (Liesinen 2018a, 468). By December 2014 the number of ISAF troops had been decreased to a bit over 13000 personnel (Holma & Jalkanen 2018, 128). On 1 January 2015 the responsibility for supporting the government of Afghanistan was passed on to the next NATO-led operation called Resolute Support (RS). At that time the operation consisted of 12000 soldiers. The aim of the operation is to support the government of Afghanistan, firstly, in creating and sustaining a secure environment which makes the reconstruction of the country and the strengthening of its democratic structures possible, and secondly, in spreading the influence of the central government to whole of Afghanistan. The troops serving in the RS are not supposed to take part in combat activities. (Holma & Jalkanen 2018, 128, 133.)

Finland chose to participate in ISAF straight from its beginning. The first section of Finnish troops who were deployed to Kabul consisted – by January 2002 – of 50 personnel specialised in Civilian-Military Cooperation (CIMIC) activities.⁹ (Holma & Jalkanen 2018, 125–126; cf. Liesinen 2018a, 465–466.) In 2004 it was decided that an additional group of 20–30 peacekeepers would be deployed to the city of Maymana in Northern Afghanistan (Liesinen 2018a, 467).

The security situation in Afghanistan was challenging already in the early years of the operation. In February 2006 the FDF got involved into its heaviest armed struggle since the World War II as an enraged crowd from Maymana attacked a joint base with 10 Finns, 17

⁹ For more on Finland’s first contributions in Afghanistan, see Koskela 2012 and Holma 2018.

Norwegians, 5 Swedes, and two Latvians. The caricatures of prophet Muhammed published in *Jyllands Posten* -newspaper earlier in September 2005 had their provocative effect in Afghanistan a few months later. Ten peacekeepers were wounded, but the troops suffered no losses. (Liesinen 2018a, 467; see also Lindholm 2012, 127–142; Muraja 2014, 32–36.) Even if the Finnish troops were able to avoid casualties for quite a long time, the worst-case scenario came to pass in the spring of 2007. The first Finnish peacekeeper to die in Afghanistan was Sergeant Petri Immonen. He was serving in Maymana and on the way to a local hospital with Norwegian medical staff as their group was attacked with a remote-controlled hand grenade. (Liesinen 2018a, 467.)

The caricatures did not rise tensions only in 2006. In his autobiography (2018) late Major Timo Liene, who served as a CIMIC officer in Afghanistan in early 2008, depicted an interesting course of events. It started as a big crowd had started to gather and demonstrate around the Blue Mosque in Mazar-e-Sharif due to the drawings. The Finns and Swedes stationed in a camp located a few kilometres from the mosque saw from a CNN news broadcast that the anti-Danish demonstration of thousands of people were led by a notable religious actor in Northern Afghanistan, the official for religious affairs in the region, called Qari Hayatullah. However, Liene had met the agitator before and had managed to build good relations with him. According to Liene the religious leader had apparently been pleased with his CIMIC activities and background in theological studies, and the two got along well. Even without the approval from his superior, a Swedish colonel, Liene arranged a patrol to take him and an interpreter to meet with Hayatullah. Despite the big crowd and the obvious tensions, he was able to reach Hayatullah, who invited Liene into his office to talk. There Liene told him that the Danish troops had already been transferred to other parts of Afghanistan and that none of them were left in the Northern parts of the country. As a result of the meeting, Hayatullah promised that it would be announced in all the mosques of Northern Afghanistan that there are no Danish troops serving in the area anymore and that there is no need to harm ISAF soldiers due to the incident. According to Liene what Hayatullah said also happened and ISAF soldiers were not harmed because of the caricatures in the Northern parts of the country anymore. (Liene 2018, 14–16, 226–227.)

By 2008 the amount of the Finnish troops had increased to 100 peacekeepers. At the same time, the dispersed troops were gradually centralised to Mazar-E-Sharif – CIMIC activities in Kabul and presence in Maymana were ended in 2007 – and attached to a PRT under Swedish command. (Holma & Jalkanen 2018, 127; Liesinen 2018a, 467.) In the beginning of 2010, most of the Finnish troops served in the PRT and MOTs (Mobile

Observation Teams). In addition to that there were officers serving in various headquarters as mentors and liaison officers. The number of the Finnish troops in Afghanistan reached its peak in the beginning of 2012 with 195 personnel. (Holma & Jalkanen 2018, 127–128.)

Due to the increase in insurgency activities the situation in Northern Afghanistan was most volatile during the years of 2009–2012. The Finnish troops were not unaffected. For instance, an explosion of a roadside bomb caused serious injuries for two Finnish peacekeepers in October 2009. An attack with bazookas and grenades injured three Finns in November 2010. A vehicle-borne improvised explosive device targeted against a Finnish-Swedish patrol in the end of January 2011 was also a close call but caused no casualties. The second, and so-far the last, Finnish peacekeeper to die in Afghanistan was First Lieutenant Jukka Kansonen, who was killed by an explosion of a roadside bomb a couple of weeks later. (Liesinen 2018a, 468.) Based on the information provided by the Finnish Ministry of Defence the Finnish troops have been involved in 44 firefights and have been a target of 21 attacks with explosives between the years of 2008 and 2014. In addition to the two losses of life 15 peacekeepers have been injured – some of them seriously. (Moilanen 2014.)

After the transition of responsibility to the local security forces in 2013 the nature of the operation changed for the Finns also. From thereon ISAF focused on support functions such as training of Afghan troops and assisting in the building of local society. The number of Finnish troops was dropped to 90 personnel by December 2014. (Holma & Jalkanen 2018, 128; Liesinen 2018a, 468.) After ISAF the Finnish troops have continued contributing in Afghanistan in the operation RS. The peacekeepers have served in the multinational headquarters in Kabul and in the headquarters of the Northern Command in Mazar-e-Sharif. In addition to those who have been engaged in mentoring and training activities there has been personnel serving in medical duties, close protection, and in the National Support Element. Initially the number of Finnish troops consisted of 80 personnel (Holma 2018, 133; Liesinen 2018a, 468.) With respect to the situation in 2019, there has been approximately 60 Finns deployed during each rotation. (Afghanistan RS s.a.)

3. Theoretical Framework: Analysing and Addressing Religious Elements to Resolve Conflicts

In what follows I present the previous research central to the study and outline the theoretical framework¹⁰ of my thesis by introducing the concepts of RAA/RA and RLE/RLL in detail, examining what advantages the utilisation of religious expertise may provide for conflict resolution organisations, and assessing the potential which local religious leaders may have as networking and peacebuilding partners. The theoretical framework has been built on select studies. In the context of this thesis they comprise of, first, the publications of Steve Moore (2013) and Eric Patterson (2014), both of which focus on the role of chaplains as religious experts in international military operations; second, studies of Kim Hansen (2012) and Anne Loveland (2014), which also provide some useful insights into the topic of the thesis; and third, literature which takes a broader look at the theme of religion and conflict resolution, including contributions from Appleby (2000), Coward and Smith (2004), Gopin (2002a, 2002b), Johnston (2003), Little (2007), Smock (2010), and Sisk (2011). The research process will be discussed more in depth in the next chapter, yet a short summary is provided at this point: As a tool for research the theoretical framework supported me in creating a general understanding of the phenomenon, finding integral information from the primary data, and categorising and analysing this information. Furthermore, it was useful in the search for new information, i.e. the specific ‘Finnish features’ of the subject under study.

3.1 Previous Research: Religion and Conflict Resolution

Military chaplains are hybrids of religious leaders and government officials. When they provide advice on operational matters or engage in peacebuilding activities, they become conflict resolution actors as well. For these reasons this study is interdisciplinary in nature and draws on research conducted mainly in the fields of the Study of Religions, International Relations (IR), and Conflict Resolution (CR) – fields multidisciplinary in themselves. In this subchapter I examine the main developments in the intersection of Religion and Conflict Resolution by introducing relevant previous research related to the three abovementioned fields, helping the reader to situate this thesis into the broader academic context it belongs to.

In the ‘West’ religion was for several years considered a disappearing phenomenon which, especially in the context of conflict, was seen manifesting mainly in a destructive

¹⁰ The theoretical framework chapter of this study is partly a modification of my bachelor’s thesis called *Engaging the Religious Element in Conflict Resolution: In the Light of Approaches Introduced by S. K. Moore* from April 2015.

manner. Many social scientists were confidently waiting for the realisation of expectations expressed in the secularisation theory, according to which religion would lose its importance in the world due to increased levels of wealth and more wide-spread provision of education. However, contrary to the expectations, religion did not fade away – if it ever had – from the public domain. This started to become apparent in the ‘West’ also as religion began its comeback to the political arenas in the 1960s. Still, the negative attitudes persisted, not least due to some resurgence of religiously motivated violence in the 80s and 90s. (Marsden 2012, 1; Philpott 2018, 275–277; cf. Norris & Inglehart 2012, 3–4, 215.)

The aforementioned sentiments towards religion may, at least partly, explain why IR and its sub-fields of the Cold War era were full of theories which relied mainly on the so-called rational factors. Other kinds of variables such as culture and religion were largely dismissed.¹¹ Lee Marsden notes that even as the Cold War ended and new theories of IR were brought forth in the 90s, many of the famous theorists such as Charles Krauthammer, John Mearsheimer, and Francis Fukuyama still failed to address religion adequately. They either did not mention religion at all or dismissed it to a large extent. He remarks that only Samuel Huntington seemed to be an exception to the rule with his – contested – *Clash of Civilizations* -thesis (1993, 1996).¹² At the latest the events of 11 September 2001 forced the specialists of the field to take religion seriously. (Marsden 2012, 2–3; see also Philpott 2018, 277.)

Since the twin-tower attacks several prominent scholars have attempted to shed light on religion’s obvious but complex relationship with violence and conflict – often in the context of terrorism. In his famous book *Terror in the Mind of God: The Global Rise of Religious Terrorism* (2003, [2001]) sociologist Mark Juergensmeyer argues the myth of cosmic struggle having potential to work as a catalyst for violent acts: It has provided various perpetrators rationalising and justifying frames of reference for their atrocities and given them the sense of clarity and meaning amid harsh experiences of life: poverty, social oppression, corruption, and the like. Seeing oneself as a warrior in a greater struggle rather than as just someone merely surviving everyday life can be empowering. (Juergensmeyer 2003, 248.)

Furthermore, scholars such as Esposito (2003), McTernan (2003), Stern (2004), Kepel (2004), and Hoffman (2006) have taken looks at religion’s role as a legitimiser and driver for

¹¹ *Religion and the Cold War* (2012) by Philip Muehlenbeck provides a perspective on the role of religion in the international affairs of the time.

¹² In other fields of studies there are some notable scholars who engaged with the thematic in the 80s and 90s already. See e.g. Kepel 1984, 1991; Roy 1985, 1995; Marty & Appleby 1991, 1993, 1994, 1994; Esposito 1992; Johnston & Sampson 1994; Hoffman 1998; Palva & Pentikäinen 1999.

violence, although focusing on different aspects of the phenomenon.¹³ Contesting views exist. For example, social psychologists Clark R. McCauley and Sophia Moskalenko (2011) argue that ideology alone is a weak driver for radicalisation and present universal mechanisms¹⁴ which may contribute to the development of increased readiness to violent behaviour – justified with religious terms or not. While they do note that ideology may have an important role in the process of rationalising violence, they do not count it as a causal factor in radicalisation processes. (McCauley & Moskalenko 2011, 191, 220–221.) Besides, constructivists like William T. Cavanaugh (2009) criticise arguments like the ones of Juergensmeyer for Western secular biases and challenge the whole discourse on religion and violence arguing that supposedly secular ideologies may be just as violence promoting as so-called religious ones. Still, even Cavanaugh notes that:

There is plenty of important empirical and theoretical work to be done on the violence of certain groups of self-identified Christians, Hindus, Muslims, etc., and there are no grounds for exempting their beliefs and practices from the causal factors that produce violence. For example, there is no doubt that, under certain circumstances, particular construals of Islam or Christianity contribute to violence. (Cavanaugh 2009, 54.)

The more nuanced studies of religion and violence explore the relationship of ideological and other factors in more detail. Cognitive anthropologist Scott Atran (2010) acknowledges religion's influence on human perception and motivation but does not consider its direct connections to violence only. Even if his main argument is that people fight primarily for the members of their in-groups – friends – and not for their ideologies or values, and maintains that ideological commitment alone is rarely enough for someone to turn to deadly violence, he recognises that religion, similarly to other ideologies, may contribute to group formation and group competition: both of these phenomena, when manifesting in their most unconstructive forms, intensify violence and deadly conflicts. Moreover, he asserts that ideological commitment is often a necessary component for sustaining long-term violent efforts. (Atran 2010, 295–317; see also Patterson 2012, 118–120.) Additional research on the relationship of religion and other factors which may contribute to radicalisation has further deepened the current understanding concerning religion's potential to foster violence (see e.g. Dunbar 2013; Whitehouse 2013, Sinnott-Armstrong 2013, Philpott 2013; Hall 2013; Jones 2013; Dawson & Bramadat 2014).

¹³ Gorski & Türkmen-Dervişoğlu (2012) divide the analyses to micro (belief, identity), meso (elites, ideology), and macro (values, culture) levels.

¹⁴ The twelve universal mechanisms of radicalisation identified by McCauley and Moskalenko (2011): Personal grievance, group grievance, slippery slope, love, thrill seeking, love, group polarisation, group competition, group isolation, jiu-jitsu politics, hatred, and martyrdom.

Apart from the emergence of vast amounts of literature focusing on religion, violence and conflict, changes in the character of modern conflicts have impacted the field of CR as well, both in terms of research and practice. Religious and cultural elements have been increasingly considered due to their growing role in armed confrontations since the end of the Cold War. (Kriesberg 2007, 34–35; Marsden 2012, 3–4; Patterson 2012, 115.) Moore acknowledges the book *Religion, the Missing Dimension of Statecraft* (1994) by Douglas Johnston and Cynthia Sampson as ‘the first scholarly endeavor to draw attention to the role of religious peacebuilding’ (Moore 2013, 81). Atalia Omer in turn credits R. Scott Appleby’s *The Ambivalence of the Sacred: Religion, Violence, and Reconciliation* (2000) as an important turning point which set the quest for religious peacebuilding in motion, made space for theological and hermeneutical enquiry of peace-promoting features in religious traditions, and provided a more comprehensive and balanced picture of religion in general:

While the “clash” thesis does take religion seriously on its own terms as a causal factor in international relations and global politics, it renders religion as an ahistorical, monolithic, and unchanging essence. This lens produces an overly simplistic, belligerent, skewed, and deterministic picture of religion and conflict in the post–Cold War era. This picture is an appealing one precisely because of its simplicity; it consequently functions as a self-fulfilling prophecy with both Islamists and xenophobic Western commentators rendering their objectives in terms of ineradicable and irreconcilable differences between civilizations. The “ambivalence of the sacred” thesis, on the other hand, is grounded in recognition of the internal pluralities of religious traditions, consequently articulating a non-essentialist and non-reductionist constructive and contextually sensitive framework. (Omer 2015, 3–4.)

The earlier studies, like those of Gopin (2002a, 2002b), Helmick and Petersen (2001), Abu-Nimer (2003), Coward and Smith (2004), Busuttil and ter Haar (2005), Little (2007), and Sampson (2007) highlight religion’s positive potential in CR and point out that religious individuals operate at all levels of CR activities, whether it be peace negotiations at the highest political plane or local initiatives at the grassroots. In addition to that they reveal that several NGOs which engage in this field have been established on religious principles and values, as well as chart out future possibilities and courses for the field. These studies focus on presenting case studies, examining peace promoting resources in religious traditions, and studying other specific aspects – such as traditions, rituals, religious actors, and others – of the phenomenon (see also Sisk 2011; Matyók & al. 2014), but lack overall analyses. Only the articles *Religion and Mediation: The Role of Faith-Based Actors in International Conflict Resolution* (2009) by Jacob Bercovitch and S. Ayse Kadayifci-Orellana and *Ethno-Religious Conflicts: Exploring the Role of Religion in Conflict Resolution* (2009) by S. Ayse Kadayifci-Orellana provide the first systematic analyses of the distinctive features and strengths of religious actors and their methods in CR (see also Hertog 2010).

Scholars of this tradition usually build their arguments on the findings that on one hand religious dynamics make the conflict more complex but on the other hand they might provide

creative opportunities for its resolution (e.g. Svensson 2012, 119, 133). Still, scholars like David R. Smock acknowledge that one should have modest expectations towards faith-based approaches to conflict resolution. Although they may bring about notable progress, only rarely they put an end to violence. Too narrow approaches do not usually work as the efficiency of conflict resolution depends on many cumulative factors. Political, ethnic, and economic realities usually contribute to outcomes of conflicts characterised by religious elements. Therefore, having the focus just on religion may not be assumed to be sufficient. According to Smock the use of diverse methods and comprehensive cooperation of both religious and secular actors is needed. (Smock 2010, 43–46; see also Gopin 2002a, 29; Funk & Woolner 2011, 328.) In addition to various practical challenges also the underlying presuppositions and normative attitudes of faith-based CR have gained increased attention in the latest publications of the field (see e.g. Marsden 2012; Appleby, Omer & Little 2015).

Within the intersection of Religion and IR, scholars such as Johnston (2003), Hoover and Seiple (2004), and Thomas (2005) continued challenging secular mindsets by arguing for the relevance of religion in foreign affairs and promoting its constructive engagement in the early 2000s. Some scholars like Pippa Norris and Ronald Inglehart (orig. 2004) maintain that secularisation is taking place even if the overall number of religious people is rising in the world. They suspect that the growing divide between religious and secular societies likely increases the importance of understanding cultural differences in international affairs. (Norris & Inglehart 2012, 6, 241.) The industry has since boomed, and one can find religion being taken into consideration as the main subject (Funk & Said 2008; Haynes 2009; Patterson 2011; Hoover, Seiple & Otis 2012; Wellman & Lombardi 2012; Shah, Stepan & Toft 2012; Nordquist 2013; Bosco 2014; Hassner 2016; Marsden 2019) or at least a part (Snyder 2011; Choi 2016; Philpott 2018) of many of the newer publications. In Finland Heikki Pesonen, Tuula Sakaranaho, and Sini Paukkunen served recently as editors for a study which focuses on the role of religion in world politics (2019).

A few critical comments must be brought forth at this point. Firstly, in the *Study of Religions*, the very concepts of religious and secular – and their clear distinctions – have been contested as a modern invention (see Beyer 2011; Smith 2012). This is not to say that the IR and CR scholars with a ‘realist’ approach to religion have failed to recognise the problematics that come with the concepts or the religious versus secular -dichotomy (see e.g. Thomas 2005, 21–45). Contributions that focus on the overlaps have been made also: Philip S. Gorski and Gülay Türkmen-Dervişoğlu argue that ‘it is not really possible to draw a line between secular nationalism and religion: secular nationalisms are not free of religious elements and

sometimes even metamorphose into religious nationalisms' (Gorski & Türkmen-Dervişoğlu 2012, 143). James A. Gregor (2012) in turn claims that the totalitarian systems of the 20th century functioned as religions in many respects even if they were promoted as secular. Secondly, also within the field of IR a constructivist group of scholars has emerged to challenge the current discourses on religion in the foreign affairs circles (see Cavanaugh 2009; Goldstone 2011; Fitzgerald 2011). Elizabeth Shakman Hurd (2015) argues that policy-making and initiatives focusing on religious dynamics may strengthen divisive discourses and thus foster the very conflicts they ought to resolve. Accordingly, she calls for more cautious courses of action to be taken. Thirdly, it must be noted that women are quite absent in the studies of Religion and Conflict Resolution. Only some scholars have explored their contributions to faith-based peacebuilding (see Kwok 2012; Sharify-Funk & Woolner 2012; Marshall & Hayward 2015; Hayward 2015).

Among Finnish scholars Religion and Conflict Resolution has received limited attention. Although with different focuses in terms of context, the following two studies situate close to this thesis. The doctoral dissertation of Katri Kyllönen, *Uskonnon rooli maahanmuuttajien konfliktien sovittelussa. Sovittelijoiden, maahanmuuttajien ja kirkon maahanmuuttajatyöntekijöiden näkökulma* (The Role of Religion in the Mediation of Immigrants' Conflicts. Mediators', Immigrants', and the Church Immigrant Workers' Perspective, 2012), can be considered a pioneering work in the field. Kyllönen demonstrates the capacity religion and religious actors may have in creating connections to and between immigrant communities. A few years later Jari Portaankorva followed with his doctoral dissertation *Uskontodiplomatia ja konfliktinratkaisu: muslimit ja kristityt sovinnon rakentajina* (Faith-based Diplomacy and Conflict Resolution: Muslims and Christians Building Reconciliation, 2018). He displays how faith-based peacebuilding may support conflict resolution at local, national, and international levels, and argues that these efforts need to be integrated so that they may bring about sustainable developments.

Needless to say, being inspired by the studies of Moore (2013) and Patterson (2014), which are presented in detail in the next subchapter, this thesis presents a new field of inquiry to the Finnish research of Religion and Conflict resolution. At the same time, due to its focus on the Finnish context, it provides a fresh angle to military chaplains' conflict resolution endeavours, a phenomenon which has been examined previously from the North American viewpoint mainly. Following the 'realist' tradition of Religion and Conflict Resolution yet keeping the 'critical' perspectives of the Studies of Religion in mind, I trust that this thesis makes an ample and balanced contribution to the topic.

3.2 Military Chaplains as Religious Experts

Military chaplains resolving conflicts is not a new phenomenon, yet it seems that chaplains engaging in activities of this kind have most likely been very rare exemptions to the rule. Yet, older historical documents reveal that some individual US military chaplains attempted to mitigate armed confrontations already in the 18th and 19th century, negotiating with their British, native American, and Spanish adversaries at least. By doing so they sometimes managed to save lives or even secure bloodless surrenders. (Klocek & Hassner 2014, 175; see also Hansen 2012, 23.) Obviously, some further research and critical evaluation of these events would be needed. While it might well be that these chaplains' contributions have been advantageous for the US troops, neither their intentions nor the conditions of their adversaries' surrender are being discussed in the reports.

However, in the 20th century American chaplains assumed mediation roles when the rivalling armies negotiated about the evacuations of the wounded and the dead amid the World Wars (Klocek & Hassner 2014, 175), and when the US forces tried to win the hearts and minds of local populations later in Japan, Korea, and Vietnam (Hansen 2012, 23). Furthermore, US chaplains are known of having educated their troops about local religious and cultural issues to some extent already since the 1960s. Engagement with local religious leaders started to take place in those days also, but it became a more significant aspect of the chaplain's work only when the US troops were deployed to the Balkans in the 90s, and to Iraq and Afghanistan in the next decade. (Loveland 2014, 133–137; Keller 2014, 61.) The increased operational focus of chaplains has caused controversy in the US from early on. Many have been concerned about the possible violations of his protected status that come with the entanglement in operational decision-making, information gathering, and other combat related tasks. Although in the US many of these issues have been addressed in the form of doctrine and guidelines by now (Loveland 2014, 138–145; Keller 2014, 65–66), it is possible that some obscurities and difficult ethical questions remain.

As for the modern concepts, when military chaplains assume the roles of religious experts, approaches which Steve Moore calls Religious Area Analysis (RAA) and Religious Leader Engagement (RLE) become of central importance. Eric Patterson's terms of choice, Religious Advicement (RA) and Religious Leader Engagement (or Religious Leader Liaison, RLL) are practically identical with Moore's terms, and are treated so in this thesis. In their publications RAA/RA may be understood as a part of RLE/RLL, but in this study they are considered separately for the sake of conceptual clarity. Since the following description of the approaches helps one to comprehend the core structure of the phenomenon under study, it is

naturally the most important component supporting the analysis of the research material, as well as the evaluation of the research findings.

Moore explains that the goal of RAA is to provide understanding how religion influences people's behaviour in a given AO. This is done by collecting and analysing data concerning religious practices and traditions of local populations. The collection and analysis of information will begin before the deployment – if possible – and will continue in the given AO as encounters with local religious leaders and communities take place. (Moore 2013, 104–105.) As to the role of military chaplains and the potential of the approach, he writes that:

Coupled with advanced theological training, analysis of this nature positions chaplains to better interpret the nuances of religious belief that often escape detection – something that could be very costly to a mission. In grasping something of the meaning and reality of the faith perspective, chaplains are more apt to appreciate how the belief system of the grassroots person may color their response to given mission initiatives, plans of action, troop movement, etc. The nature of command often necessitates sending troops into the way of harm. As such, the availability of all information pertinent to the decision-making process is critical. Advising commanders of the possible pitfalls or backlashes of given courses of action with respect to religious communities is a crucial aspect of the role of chaplains. (Moore 2013, 104.)

Patterson in turn describes RA to comprise all preparations and executions of accumulation and provision of information concerning religious and cultural elements within an AO, i.e. acting as a specialist of religion for one's troops. He emphasises the importance of increasing the commander's awareness of these matters so that he may be well informed about the specific features and effects of local religions and cultures and take them into account accordingly when operations are being planned and conducted. (Patterson 2014, 14–15; 19.) He argues that 'it has been a matter of life or death for the past decade' (Patterson 2014, 19).

A rather successful real-life example of RAA (or RA) activities is provided in Moore's book. Military Chaplain Michael Hoyt conveyed a case from the time when he was serving in the US Army in Iraq. It had to do with a situation when the US troops had imposed restrictions of movement in a certain neighbourhood in order to prevent insurgency activities in the area. As an unintentional side-effect the troops blocked the access to the source of water nearest to the local Mosque. Thus, the observation of ablution practices and ritual purity before the daily prayers became more challenging for the local Muslim population and increased antagonism towards the US troops started to develop. However, due to his networks Chaplain Hoyt was able to learn about the issue and consult his leadership about it. As a result, the US troops adjusted their activities accordingly and the risk of unnecessary confrontation decreased. (Moore 2013, 104–105.)

With reference to RLE, Moore situates it in the context of peacebuilding activities and asserts that chaplains' work as bridgebuilders between different actors is of strategic

importance. First of all, chaplains may support mission members – both military and civilian – in building trust and good relations with local religious leaders. He writes that chaplains' status as religious leaders themselves provides them common ground with local religious leaders, for both are recognised as trusted individuals and public representatives of spiritual values within their own communities. In addition to that their status as religious individuals may provide chaplains additional rapport in places where 'the Westerners' are generally thought of being secularists and thus a possible threat to traditional ways of life. Second of all, chaplains may mediate and support reconciliation between locals. Usually they can consult conflicting parties one by one, and sometimes they may even be able to get them around the same table to negotiate. Moore argues, that when chaplains are bringing together conflicting parties, and especially their religious leaders, they might be able, depending on the situation and their skills, to work as catalysts for beneficial interaction. Chaplains may provide local populations new platforms for communication, encourage them to launch reconciliation processes, or even support them in finding ways to cooperate. At best this may contribute substantially to the stabilisation of areas of operation. (Moore 2013, 97, 103–108.) Like Moore, Patterson describes RLE (or Religious Leader Liaison, RLL) as chaplains' peacebuilding efforts. According to him the idea of the approach is that military chaplains meet with local religious leaders – as well as other representatives of local populations – with the intention and aim of fostering peace and mutual understanding. (Patterson 2014, 14, 19.)

One of the first studied contemporary RLE/RLL efforts took place in 1993–1994 as Canadian chaplains – including Steve Moore himself – serving in Bosnia tried to build trust between leaders of the different ethno-religious groups found in the country: Bosnian Muslim, Croat Roman Catholic, and Serbian Orthodox. Chaplains Moore and Eugenio, who were deployed to the outskirts of Sarajevo with the Canadian Contingent of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) in the winter of 1993, were soon approached by Imam Asim Azdahič, a regionally influential religious leader, and invited to discuss about peace and reconciliation with some of the religious leaders of the local Muslim community. During their rotation Chaplains Moore and Eugenio were able to build good relationships with the Bosnian Muslim and Croat Roman Catholic communities, which became open for the idea of dialogue. Their successors, Chaplains Guay and Pichette managed to further include Serbian Orthodox leaders in the process. Although the collaboration with the three faith communities eventually resulted in a joint interreligious celebration, with the regional leadership of each faith group participating in it, it failed to create long lasting effects. (Moore 2013, 133–139, 144.)

The reports from the 21st century include experiences of – in addition to American and Canadian – French, Norwegian, and New Zealander chaplains. Case studies reveal chaplains advising commanders and engaging local religious leaders and communities in Afghanistan, Kosovo, Iraq, and various countries of East Africa (Moore 2013; Cutler 2014). In addition to operational roles some chaplains have been utilised at strategic levels also: they have contributed to the planning and coordination of religious conflict analysis and conflict resolution activities of entire countries (Hoyt 2014; Cutler 2014; West 2014).

Another case study presented in Moore's book describes the impact of RLE/RLL activities of Michel de Peyret, a Roman Catholic priest who served twice in the French contingent of Kosovo Force (KFOR). During his second tour in the NATO-led mission in April-August 2005 he managed – due to his previous experience in peacebuilding and his commander's support – to bring together the top religious leaders of all three faith communities of their AO: the Albanian Muslim, the Albanian Roman Catholic, and the Serbian Orthodox. In the beginning de Peyret created relations with the religious communities separately, being able to build trust and reduce tensions between the local population and the French troops. After learning that the local religious leaders had never met each other, the French troops decided to invite them to a shared meal with de Peyret's help. They accepted the invitation and the encounter was a success. The religious leaders offered apologies to each other and organised consecutive meetings. Eventually they even joined forces in a public statement appealing for dialogue and condemning violence. (Moore 2013, 169, 175–179.)

RAA/RA and RLE/RLL are just one approach in the vast field of conflict resolution. Still, when one wants to address problems more comprehensively in places where religion matters, it is arguably a useful tool to be included into the repertoire of conflict resolution strategies. However, like conflict resolution in general, using these applications is not hasty business. Trust building, networking, and finding domains of cooperation requires a lot of patience and work (Moore 2013, 106–108; Appleby 2000, 279). What is noteworthy is the flexibility of the concepts. They were developed in military context but could be useful for civilian organisations as well. (Moore 2013, 258.) To mention a few possible examples, similar approaches could be used in civilian crisis management operations or in NGO activities, many of which take place in regions where religious elements play a big role in conflicts. The approaches could prove to be similarly important to local officials, for instance police forces and other security actors: in regions devastated by conflict, the relations between local officials and religious communities may be considerably weakened, if not severed, and tools are needed for addressing the problem. Therefore, should RAA/RA and RLE/RLL be

considered in the framework of CCM in the future, it seems likely that they would provide conflict resolution organisations an area of cooperation with a wide range of possibilities.

RAA/RA and RLE/RLL do not come without challenges. As it has been stated very clearly in the earlier studies, the chaplain's qualities and training play a decisive role, making them a central area of investigation in this study too. Sometimes simply the orientation or lack of relevant skills may render a chaplain unsuitable for the role of religious expert. For instance, not all theological inclinations are useful in peacebuilding endeavours with local religious leaders. Moreover, recognising suitable partners – 'tolerant voices' – from among local populations requires certain interpersonal skills and sound judgement. (Moore 2013, 110, 246–247; Appleby 2000, 287.) The background and experience of chaplains are of importance in this. For example, Klocek and Hassner write that among the US chaplains – who work in a rather multicultural and multireligious environment already – the engagement of leaders of various faith traditions was not considered as challenging as the provision of religious advice. Even if it may be presumed that chaplains have subject expertise on world religions, this is not necessarily the case – in the US context it is rarely the case. Certainly, inadequate training may be addressed but based on the US experiences it is not always clear how it can be done efficiently with respect to RAA/RA and RLE/RLL. (Klocek & Hassner 2014, 179–181; see also Nix 2014, 57–58.)

Another factor which may undermine chaplains' potential as religious experts is the obscurity of their expert role. Without a clear role definition and guidelines within the military organisation chaplains may end up dealing with ambiguous tasks that are not integrated into the operational objectives of missions. Also, should the issue be left inadequately addressed, chaplains' chances with RAA/RA and RLE/RLL could be hampered by leaders who are not aware of the broader possibilities which come with the approaches. Chaplains usually have significant resources at their disposal, especially in comparison to those of local religious leaders and communities, yet without the permission and support from their organisation they might not be able to make use of these resources and act properly, or at all, in this domain. Moreover, without standardised procedures RLE/RLL attempts run into the risk of becoming a discontinuous endeavour due to the short rotations and their changing focuses. (Moore 2013, 161, 251; Klocek & Hassner 2014, 177, 180; see also Hoyt 2014, 78; Cutler 2014, 109.) Somewhat surprisingly the role of leaderships' awareness and understanding is almost fully neglected in the previous research, and therefore special attention is paid to it in the analysis of this study. Also, other individual and structural issues which may affect RAA/RA and RLE/RLL are attempted to be specified.

Furthermore, Moore argues that issues like chaplains' relationship with influence activities and information gathering for intelligence purposes need to be addressed. Unsurprisingly, the utilisation of chaplains for tasks like military deception or targeting would compromise their authenticity and credibility as trustworthy religious leaders who try to transcend hostilities. Notwithstanding, it must be noted that even if the intent and goals of RAA/RA and RLE/RLL were in order, and no misuse of the chaplains took place, it is possible that locals became suspicious and associated these activities with propaganda, espionage, deception, or the like. (Moore 2013, 240–241.) Likewise, proselytization or promotion of ideas like religious freedom could potentially have similar effects. As Klocek and Hassner argue, further inquiry is needed to determine under which conditions the presence and actions of chaplains would rather produce negative than positive outcomes. (Klocek & Hassner 2014, 184.) Finally, military operations obviously often include an increased risk of facing kinetic threats. Hostile actors do not necessarily respect chaplains' status as non-combatants and, as implied earlier, they may even consider RLE/RLL as an activity which needs to be opposed by force. Both chaplains and collaborating local religious leaders may thus turn into high value targets for opposition forces. (Moore 2013, 240.) Militaries do have means to address such issues, but it is reasonable to suppose that in some cases risks outbalance possible gains. The way that the above-mentioned issues have been taken into account in the FDF tell about the state of RAA/RA and RLE/RLL within the organisation and are therefore relevant for this thesis also.

3.3 Added Value of Religious Expertise

Religious experts – military chaplains included – are the first group of key actors in faith-based conflict resolution. Due to their training and experiences they have developed a comprehensive understanding concerning religious elements and their dynamics in conflicts. Because of their status as credible religious actors they have a good basis to establish rapport with local religious leaders and communities. In this subchapter I summarise how their contributions differ from those of other conflict resolution actors, having the focus especially on the added value their expertise may provide for conflict resolution organisations they are working for. The added value is examined under four categories: 1) knowledge and information, 2) trust, 3) dialogue, and 4) religious tradition. The ultimate purpose of the following paragraphs is to aid the analysis of the research material in relation to the interviewees' conceptions concerning the significance of the chaplain and his RAA/RA and RLE/RLL contributions in operations.

‘The starting point for resolving conflict is understanding it’ (Burnett 1994, 287). Firstly, information and knowledge about religion provides relevant understanding, for religion has an impact on how people think and act (Gopin 2002a, 13–14).

Indeed, literally billions of people structure their daily routines around the spiritual practices enjoined by a religious tradition, and they often do so quite “publicly”. Dress, eating habits, gender relations, negotiations of time, space, and social calendar – all unfold beneath a sacred canopy. Around much of the world, politics and civil society are suffused with religion. In regions of the Middle East, Africa, and South Asia, for example, it is not uncommon for political leaders and government officials to demonstrate (and sometimes exaggerate) the depth of their formal religious commitment. That tests of moral character can be conducted apart from religious norms, however they are construed, is a highly contested notion in Islamic societies. (Appleby 2000, 3.)

Thus, religion is one of the key elements that guide the social behaviour and inner life of vast amounts of people. Many of these people are active participants in violent conflicts this very moment. The challenge is that religion and its effects are not always easy to detect. Religion is prone to be absorbed into culture, it gets easily mixed into politics, and it adds extra layers into already complex structures of societies. Similarly, religious actors are not free from the influence of surrounding political, cultural, social, or economic realities, and therefore rarely – if ever – act ‘purely’ religiously. Nevertheless, Appleby argues that religiously motivated behaviour may and should be discerned, for the failure to do so results in erroneous analysis of the actors and their acts. (Appleby 2000, 55–56.)

Secondly, religious texts and traditions are rich with material that has to do with reconciliation and conflict, along with stories about inner struggles of human beings amidst both war and peace. In-depth understanding of the relationship of the two, religious people and their religious traditions, helps one to understand these people and discover culturally relevant ways to resolve conflicts. (Gopin 2002a, 13–14.) Moreover, religious traditions and communities can provide religious experts with valuable information regarding the ways of life and behaviour of religious individuals and groups:

From centuries of service, reflection, and prayer, religious communities possess a profound understanding of the psychological and social, as well as the spiritual needs of the human persons and human communities (Appleby 2003, 237).

Having knowledge and information about religion serves interaction also. Appleby brings up an important observation about the significance of cultural sensitivity with concepts and words: the understandings of terms such as ‘peace’, ‘justice’, or ‘forgiveness’ differ from a religious tradition to another. In order to have meaningful conversations or mediate effectively, it is necessary to be familiar with the colloquial language of each religious community. (Appleby 2003, 251.) Furthermore, Marc Gopin notes that religious people tend to depict their circumstances with religious language and symbolism, even if religion was not among the underlying causes of the conflict in which they are involved. This opens another possibility for the utilisation of religious experts: they understand religious discourse and

action, their nuances included, and are accustomed to situations where the deepest feelings are expressed in religious terms. (Gopin 2002a, 14.)

As for the possible advantages which come with a religious identity, Little's remark is in line with those of Moore: 'In some circumstances, prominent religious identity provides a badge of trustworthiness and impartiality that can be of great benefit in either formal or informal negotiations' (Little 2007, 440; see also Moore 2013, 103). Judy Carter and Gordon S. Smith (2004, 296) state that sometimes religious leaders and actors have more freedom to move and act than their secular counterparts, as a credible religious status may add to one's political immunity and trust within and without one's own religious community. It is often associated with honesty, impartial, integrity and, high morals. Also, as Moore points out, for religious experts their religious identity works as a common ground with local religious leaders, giving the experts a better access to them and their communities (Moore 2013, 105).

The high level of trust which religious experts often enjoy may at times translate into special opportunities in conflict resolution. They may be able to build trust between third – i.e. intervening – parties and local actors and mediate between conflicting parties themselves. Assuming a mediation role may be possible even if they were representing one of the conflicting parties, for 'they are seen to transcend narrow partisanship, even though they have their own loyalties and commitments, which – in some cases – are well known.' (Little 2007, 441; see also Moore 2013, 103.) Based on the observations of Frode Lagset, a Norwegian military chaplain, it seems that chaplains' attempts of trust-building among locals are not necessarily hindered even by the fact that they are serving in foreign armed forces. According to him at least in Afghanistan the local population is used to the close association of religious, political, and military actors: 'In his estimation, affiliation with those in the uniform was not as much of a problem for the local community as some would contend.' (Moore 2013, 219.)

If religious experts find themselves in mediation roles, in an ideal case they may build bridges between the conflicting parties by encouraging dialogue and denouncing violence in collaboration with local religious leaders. Depending on the organisation they are working with and the situation at hand, they might even have the chance to provide disputants with safe spaces to meet and discuss. Thanks to the distinctive religious characteristics of the encounters, they might be able to provide spiritual guidance and counsel, for instance remind people of religious values and help them to handle grief and losses. (Carter & Smith 2004, 296–298.) Concerning the possible challenges, Gopin asserts that building trust in highly religious environments faces the same risk as conflict resolution activities in general: if the

focus is on the results, the people involved become instrumentalised. In order to avoid this, the work of religious experts should be evaluated comprehensively, not only narrowly based on short-term outcomes. (Gopin 2002a, 154–158.)

Like it has been indicated in the previous paragraphs already, understanding, trust, and dialogue complement each other's in conflict resolution. As demonstrated, the faith-based approach may open new possibilities for dialogue, both between intervening parties and conflicting parties and between conflicting parties themselves. For conflict resolution organisations these additional channels of communication are most valuable, as without encounters and interaction between conflicting parties the actual resolution of their conflicts will not be possible. Once the process has started, religious experts may further support it by promoting and facilitating constructive dialogue (Little 2007, 440–441, see also Appleby 2003, 255). Context specific understanding will enable them to discuss ideas and arguments in a culturally relevant way (Appleby 2003, 239; see also Gopin 2002a, 14).

Religious and cultural understanding may prove to be an asset also when one attempts to understand non-verbal communication. As Marc Gopin notes, dialogue is not the equivalent of peace-making or conflict resolution. Depending on the culture and community, people value gestures, symbols, and acts, not to mention emotions and rationality, differently. (Gopin 2002b, 144–145.) What can be very challenging is that these non-verbal signals can be understood in various ways. For instance, there are great differences in what communities consider as appropriate or desirable gestures when it comes to themes such as reconciliation. Gopin clarifies his point in the following way:

Let us take an example. In repeated interviews and social engagements between Arabs and Jews, some at very high levels of government, I have noticed a single pattern. Arabs tend to offer honor and expect honor as a conciliatory gesture in initial meetings, and Jews see the same honoring as far less important, or something that would be part of the culmination of the relationship instead. (Gopin 2002b, 147.)

Then there are also times when dialogue may simply not be possible due to the strong emotions involved. The capacity for honest verbal expressions of feelings to the perceived enemy is simply lacking. In these cases, other forms of communication need to precede dialogue. (Gopin 2002b, 144–146.) Smock brings up an important point regarding dialogical peace-making: one should be careful not to bring disputants together too early. It is often more productive to first work separately with each party to make sure that everyone is sufficiently prepared for the encounter before it takes place. (Smock 2010, 46; see also Moore 2013, 103.)

One more aspect of religious experts and dialogue is worthy of attention. As Appleby (2000, 290–291; see also Little 2007, 440–441) demonstrates, religious mediators can be very

efficient in establishing dialogue between secular actors too. Regarding the work of an international Catholic lay community of Sant'Egidio in Kosovo, he writes:

In 1995, at a point when Sant'Egidio representatives sensed an opening, they offered to moderate a structured dialogue. Having rejected several other offers of international mediation, "the Serbs concluded that St. Egidio could facilitate dialogue on a private, humanitarian and unofficial basis", writes Roberto Morozzo della Rocca. "For their part the Albanians accepted St. Egidio as being fully independent of the Serbian state. [...] a channel for ongoing dialogue and negotiations was established in the process. Despite deteriorating relations between the two million Albanians and the 200,000 Serbs resident in Kosovo, Sant'Egidio sustained this inchoate dialogue and provided medical assistance and other forms of humanitarian aid to both sides. (Appleby 2000, 290.)

Sant'Egidio's work had a similar effect amid the Algerian civil war as their connections opened new possibilities for dialogue in the 1990s. They managed to bring together prominent secular and religious leaders and offer them a safe platform for negotiations. (Appleby 2000, 291–292.)

The possible advantages gained with religious expertise are not limited to the increased levels of understanding, trust, and communication. With active theological enquiry and discussion, one might be able to harness some of the transformative power of religious traditions in favour of conflict resolution:

Familiarity with classical sources might make it possible to distinguish where and when a leader is expressing real traditions and when he is using the religion to gain political power through the use of violence. Even if he is expressing an authentic violent source, exploration is required to see if there is theological deliberation, a new look at the sources, or alternative sources that might countermand the desire for violence or conflict that is implied in the tradition. Religious traditions are dynamic, and can change profoundly through discussion and the influence of leadership. (Gopin 2002a, 19.)

There are not only violence-prompting resources within religious traditions: 'On the constructive side, religions have a keen awareness on of injustice and the subtle workings of prejudice and evil' (Appleby 2003, 237). Therefore, sacred texts can function as an inspirator for both individual and communal transformation, and the religious values incorporated in various traditions can turn out to be useful in conflict resolution. (Gopin 2002a, 19–20; see also Carter & Smith 2004, 279–281.)

Moreover, religious traditions do not include texts and ideas only, but there is a ritual aspect as well. Concerning reconciliation, Gopin argues that for most people, ceremonies and rituals are of great importance in the times of crisis. He sees that the majority of people cannot actually cope with verbal reconciliation, but fortunately '[t]here are many ways that people say "I am sorry" with their deeds and symbols without uttering a word.' (Gopin 2002b, 196.) Thus, he argues against solely verbal approaches to religious peace-making and suggests that when conflicting parties are prepared enough, they could invite the other party to join them in their rituals, agree to participate in the rituals of the opposing party or possibly even take turns in such occasions. (Gopin 2002b, 195–196.) Moore maintains that religious experts are suitable to engage local religious leaders through rituals. Regardless of the intensity of their

religious dimension – whether the rituals are simply shared meals or joint prayers – they provide religious leaders with chances to encounter each other and, hopefully, to alter their relations for the better. (Moore 2013, 56.)

3.4 Potential of Local Religious Leaders as Partners

Local religious leaders are the second group of central actors in faith-based conflict resolution. In many societies they are key individuals on whose willingness to cooperate the success of conflict resolution attempts can be highly dependent (Moore 2013, 106). Smock states that ‘without credible local partners, no international actor has a chance of making much of a contribution to conflict resolution’ (Smock 2010, 43). Appleby considers religious leaders who view nonviolent peace-making as a religious duty particularly potential candidates as such partners (Appleby 2003, 251). In this subchapter I examine the added value that can be gained if conflict resolution organisations send religious experts to network and build peace with local religious leaders in accordance with the RLE/RLL principles. The added value is presented below under four categories: 1) mobilisation of people, 2) connections and networks, 3) political influence, and 4) resources. This part of the theoretical framework supports the evaluation of the interviewed chaplains’ and commanders claims and observations concerning Finnish troops’ collaboration with local religious leaders. It provides an overall theoretical idea concerning the range of potential outcomes of such collaboration which may be then later compared to the interviewees’ experiences.

Religious leaders are usually influential individuals, particularly within their own communities, and their religious authority gives them special leverage to mobilise people. Therefore, with their words and deeds, they can directly contribute to the development of conflicts, for good or ill. (Appleby 2000, 283.) When it comes to the possible positive contributions, there are many ways how religious leaders can support conflict resolution by addressing issues among their own followers. They may remind people of the importance of virtues and values such as tolerance and peace. They may promote human rights and justice and condemn violence and incitement to it. They may set an inspiring example by displaying will to forgive and reconcile. (Carter & Smith 2004, 294–295.) Appleby provides an example of contributions of this sort from Kosovo:

During the aftermath of the war and continuing through the war in Kosovo, Serbian Orthodox as well as Croatian Catholic bishops, priests and lay leaders tempered their ultranationalist rhetoric, condemned atrocities and attitudes within their own communities, sponsored or participated in a series of local reconciliation seminars, and entered more readily and frequently into ecumenical collaboration, including participation in the promising Interreligious Councils established in Bosnia and Kosovo. (Appleby 2003, 246–247.)

As for the ritual aspect of faith-based conflict resolution, religious leaders may do their share by leading local communities through times of sorrow and mourning in culturally appropriate ways. In some cases, they might even manage to bring conflicting parties together for joint rituals. There they may have possibilities to urge people to acknowledge and apologise for the sufferings of the opposing party. (Carter & Smith 2004, 296.) Religious experts can support these sorts of events as catalysts or assistants (Appleby 2003, 247; see also Moore 2013, 252). In some situations, joint pursuits for conflict resolution which have cut across religious boundaries have been most successful. Interreligious endeavours initiated by prominent religious actors have mobilised a great number of people for peace. A good example of this is the case of Pastor James Wuye and Imam Muhammad Ashafa from Nigeria. The impact of their joint project, the Interfaith Mediation Centre, has been arguably vast:

By now the Interfaith Mediation Centre has worked with nearly seven thousand youths, has a membership of ten thousand people, and has located at least two youth leaders trained in conflict resolution in every one of Nigeria's thirty six states (Little 2007, 432).

Religious leaders' significance in conflict resolution is often based on their good connections and networks: in general, they are well-connected through the religious institutions they oversee. These institutions do not only bring people together efficiently at the grassroots level, improving networking among local populations, but they also connect local communities to larger religious organisations and networks (Appleby 2003, 253; Moore 2013, 125). Some religious leaders – as well as lay members of religious communities – may even have friends behind the enemy lines (Gopin 2002b, 212; see also Moore 2013, 100). Also, some of them engage in intercultural or interreligious initiatives already (Appleby 2003, 254). Thus, approaching religious leaders may enable conflict resolution actors to gain the widest possible access to alienated communities.

Such efforts of track two diplomacy, which differ from traditional diplomacy practiced by government officials and politicians, can provide creative opportunities for conflict resolution. Especially in those regions of the world where there are no clear boundaries between religion, culture, and politics, faith-based actors and approaches can prove to be most valuable in opening such opportunities. (Philpott & Cox 2010, 2–3.) Daniel Philpott and Brian Cox illustrate this potential by conveying a report of a Hindu bandit from Kashmir who went through a noticeable transformation during an interfaith event. Even though the bandit was strongly insulting his opponents in the beginning of the seminar, a noticeable change took place in him over its course:

At the end of the three day seminar, our attention was naturally piqued when the same man stood up again before the participants, but with a different message. He apologized to the Muslims for his insensitivity to

their suffering in the conflict, and forgave them for their violence against the Hindus. What had elicited the change? The man had experienced the telling of his story to Muslims for the first time. The seminar allowed him to understand the complexity of social justice, and to come in terms with the historical wounds of his community, ultimately moving him to embrace apology and forgiveness. All this was accomplished in an atmosphere of religious ritual and reflection. (Philpott & Cox 2010, 1.)

In respect to religious leaders and political influence, two aspects must be observed: on one hand, religious leaders are often formidable political actors at local and regional levels – whether they pursue it or not – and sometimes they even reach national and international prominence (Appleby 2000, 284–285; Smock 2010, 44–45). If religion plays a big role in a certain society, religious actors might be capable, or even needed, to provide the necessary legitimacy for political processes (Smock 2010, 45; see also Little 2010, 441–442; Johnston & Cox 2003, 14). At best, when joining conflict resolution efforts, religious leaders may be able to convince political leaders to change their attitudes, follow their lead, and even join them in the faith-based pursuit for peace, for there are many prominent politicians who are religious themselves (Johnston & Cox 2003, 22–23; Appleby 2003, 241). On the other hand, faith-based peace-making efforts of religious leaders may complement political processes, not by directly interfering in political matters, but by focusing on other aspects of conflicts. Smock argues that ‘sometimes it is more productive for religious leaders to consider emotionally divisive issues than for them to be debated in secular/political context’ (Smock 2010, 46). Carter and Smith, too, remind that there might be issues which are impossible to be settled within traditional political settings or are simply better to be addressed by religious means:

From disputants’ point of view, on the other hand, interfaith initiatives offer an opportunity to get beyond political posturing and the pieces of paper on which peace agreements are written. They give disputants, especially at the grassroots level, a chance to move from the intellectual and political realm to the emotional and more practical realms of peacebuilding. (Carter & Smith 2004, 291.)

In addition to authority, connections, and political power, religious leaders often have various resources at their disposal. Should they be willing to cooperate with conflict resolution actors, these resources may become available for the service of peace. In some cases, depending on their status and connectedness, the resources available to local religious leaders are not necessarily restricted to local level only, but might surpass regional or even national borders:

They may be associated with large and well-funded international organizations, which they can call up for assistance. This can allow religious leaders to act and direct resources faster than either governmental or non-governmental actors. (Carter & Smith 2004, 296.)

The information provided by religious leaders may prove to be an important resource for those who wish to better understand and resolve conflicts. Due to their networks and connections within their own societies, religious leaders possess first-hand knowledge about local issues. They speak local languages and likely know the different actors personally.

Because of their background and education, they usually have extensive cultural know-how and are well predisposed to assess the conflicts affecting their communities. (Moore 2013, 79.) Regarding human resources, if local religious leaders receive proper training, they may become important actors in conflict resolution themselves (Appleby 2003, 252–253). Furthermore, as religious leaders usually double as educators within their communities, they could pass this training on to the local populace too (Carter & Smith 295). According to Appleby, in each religious community there is a group of key people whose involvement in conflict resolution would be of great importance:

While levels of religious literacy vary, in most religious communities a core group of disciplined and dedicated believers keeps the tradition alive by performing works of mercy, providing catechetical or other religious instruction, and leading or participating worship. These adherents naturally form the heart of any systematic effort to build local cultures of peace from the conceptual and symbolic resources of the religious tradition. (Appleby 2000, 286.)

With respect to material resources of religious communities, they may consist of social places and other already-existing infrastructure (Appleby 2003, 252–253), along with material suitable for humanitarian aid. In situations where the weakening or even collapse of local or state authority entails that they lack the capacity to take care of the basic needs of local populations, the work of local religious institutions might become crucial. Due to their structures and knowledge, they are often able to provide and restore services and infrastructure. These institutions are also usually considered as trustworthy by local populations, making them natural actors to whom people turn in times of crisis. (Moore 2013, 214.)

Although the focus of this subchapter has been in the possible advantages which may be gained when conflict resolution actors collaborate with local religious leaders, there has been no intention to neglect the challenges which may come along. At times, local religious leaders might be rather of hindrance than assistance. Some do not possess relevant resources, skills, or understanding to mitigate conflict, others may purposefully incite their followers to violence and hatred. In some situations, religious leaders may simply not have enough influence to be of assistance. Moreover, like other human beings, they are not immune to the realities surrounding them. (Sisk 2011, 1–6.) Still, also these reasons speak for the need to take religious leaders into consideration – as potential spoilers at least.

4. Semi-Structured Interviews and Qualitative Content Analysis

A qualitative research method has been utilised in this thesis. Qualitative research, unlike quantitative research, does not seek statistical generalisability of findings but rather aims at describing, understanding, or theorising a specific phenomenon (Tuomi & Sarajärvi 2002, 87; Eskola & Suoranta 1998, 46), even if the findings might at times shed light on other similar phenomena or contexts also (Alasuutari 2011, 32, 37–38; Eskola & Suoranta 1998, 49–50). I chose to utilise a qualitative approach due to its suitability for exploring and describing the subject of the study in detail. A systematic literature review was conducted in order to form the introduction, background, and theoretical framework chapters. The primary data of this study was collected with semi-structured interviews. The data was then analysed with a method called qualitative content analysis. In the following subchapters I present the starting points and preconditions of the study, outline the data collection process, describe the analysis of the data, and discuss questions concerning the reliability, validity, and generalisability of this study.

4.1 Starting Points and Preconditions

The primary data of this study consists of 10 semi-structured interviews. The conduction of the interviews required a research permit from the FDF. Since my study has to do with the international operations of the FDF and touches aspects of CCM, I decided to direct my initial enquiries to the Finnish Defence Forces International Centre (FINCENT). I approached FINCENT for the first time by e-mails and phone calls in February 2018 and eventually had a meeting with its then-chief in the beginning of June 2018. He provided me guidelines how to proceed with the application for the research permit. I drafted my application – including a research plan – for the research permit during the summer of 2018. I submitted the final version of the application to the Finnish Defence Forces Defence Command in the end of August 2018 and the permit was granted in the end of September 2018.¹⁵ The interview questions (see Appendix III) were formed based on the initial theoretical framework – included in the research plan – by the end of September 2018. The interviews were conducted in various locations in Southern Finland during October and November 2018. The transcription of the interviews was finished in the end of December 2018. The whole writing process of the thesis was completed in the end of October 2019.

¹⁵ FDF research permit AO17058, 21.9.2018.

In accordance with the research permit the research participants, who contributed to the study on voluntary basis, included ten persons with relevant experience: six former military chaplains and four former commanders of Finnish contingents in Lebanon and Afghanistan. At the time of their interviews half of the chaplains were regular staff of the FDF, the other half of them being reservists who were serving in various Parishes, whereas all the former commanders were on active duty, serving with ranks of colonels and colonel lieutenants in the FDF. There was not much diversity among the interviewees them all being rather established Finnish males. Three of the military chaplains and two of the commanders were chosen to be interviewed due to their tours of duty in Lebanon, and the rest of them, three military chaplains and two commanders, were chosen due to their tours of duty in Afghanistan, although it must be noted that most of them had experience from more than one operation. The other deployments might have naturally given additional perspectives and depth to the reflections and answers of those concerned but, keeping the limits of the research permit in mind, any direct references to experiences which did not have to do with the focus countries and the studied time period of this study were left outside the analysis. In total, the research participants had approximately seven and half years of operational experience from the two countries since the year 2010.

The participants were chosen from among candidates with experience of serving as military chaplains and commanders for I assessed that they would possess the most relevant information concerning the topic but might provide different perspectives on it, which is useful when one wishes to draw a more accurate picture of the studied phenomenon (see e.g. Tuomi & Sarajärvi 2002, 87–88). In operations, the Finnish chaplain has a direct access to his commander, and he engages local religious leaders in accordance with his commander's intent (Sotilaspapiston opas 2017, 14). The logic behind the decision not to focus on one operational environment only was similar: I estimated that comparisons between experiences from the two countries would reveal different aspects of the subject under study, providing richer material for the analysis (see e.g. Eskola & Suoranta 1998, 49–50). As dictated in the research permit, this thesis has been put in writing in a manner which ensures that the identities of the research participants will not be revealed. Each participant has been given a serially numbered code, where the abbreviation CO stands for commander, CH for chaplain, L for Lebanon, and A for Afghanistan.

4.2 Data Collection

The former chief of FINCENT supported me in finding some suitable candidates for the interviews and obtaining their contact information, except for the reservists whom I found through internet searches and personal enquiries. Finding Finnish chaplains with experience from operations was not too difficult, for some of them have given interviews of their experiences, others have written blog posts or short articles from their operations, some have given out this information about their work history in their resumes or introductions in their Parish websites, and so forth. Commanders of Finnish peacekeeping and crisis management forces are likewise rather public figures and maybe even easier to be found, thanks to news agencies such as YLE and Helsingin Sanomat.

Initially I approached the suitable candidates with e-mails and phone calls. Most of the candidates whom I found and reached (15) considered the topic interesting and would have liked to participate in the study, and I ended up in a situation where I could have had more participants (14) than the research permit allowed (10). I chose the participants from among the suitable candidates based on the Lebanon and Afghanistan quotas mentioned above, the order of their positive responses, and their availability in October and November 2018. Before the interviews I sent the interview questions to the participants in advance by e-mail. The interviews, which were recorded with the interviewees' consent, took place face to face in various military facilities, church premises, and at my home. The interviews lasted from 40 to 90 minutes depending on the schedule and amount of contribution of each participant. The duration of the interviews was almost 11 hours in total. When transcribed, they became to consist of approximately 130 pages of text. The language of the interviews was Finnish, and the translations of the interview quotations used in the thesis are mine. I find that the interviews were easy to arrange and that the atmosphere during the interviews was relaxed and open every time.

There are many issues which may raise when one gathers data with interviews. In this case the process of obtaining the research permit took several months. Finding suitable participants and organising meetings with them took weeks. Half of the interviews required a full day of travel to be conducted. Also, interviewing itself – like transcribing – is a time-consuming endeavour. (See Hirsjärvi & Hurme 2000, 35, 140; Tuomi & Sarajärvi 2002, 76.) In addition to that one must consider the limits of human memory, the changes taking place in human beings, motives of the participants, levels of honesty of the participants, different ways the research questions may be understood, challenges in communication, effects of interaction between the participants and the researcher, limits of a perspective of an individual human

being, and so forth. (See Hirsjärvi & Hurme 2000, 16–18, 23, 34–36, 41–43, 48–53, 186–189; Alasuutari 2011, 69–75, 111–117).

Still, despite all the challenges it can be stated that there are certain advantages when interviewing is used for research purposes. As a method it is flexible, for it provides possibilities to repeat questions, ask for specifications, or clarify what is being meant, meaning that there are many ways to maximise the amount of relevant information which is being collected. (Tuomi & Sarajärvi 2002, 75.) The semi-structured – or thematic – interview method is considered particularly useful when the phenomenon at hand has not been studied extensively before, but it is known that the research participants are familiar with – or even experts of – the phenomenon. In such a situation, as it was in the case of this study also, the researcher may take an initial look into the presumably significant aspects of the phenomenon in advance and, based on this analysis, create a theoretical idea – or an actual theoretical framework – of it. After that the researcher may form the interview protocol around the relevant themes based on the theoretical idea. In the final phase he may start conducting the interviews, which are focused on the relevant themes. (Hirsjärvi & Hurme 2000, 35, 47.)

Both the actual and spontaneous interview questions focused on the practical aspects of the utilisation of religious expertise of Finnish military chaplains. I purposefully neither defined the concepts of RAA/RA and RLE/RLL for the interviewees nor shared my ideas concerning the topic before or during the interviews. I also did not single out any of the particular features of the approaches – presented in the theoretical framework – and avoided asking specific questions concerning the possible advantages, challenges, and ideas for the development of RAA/RA and RLE/RLL (such as ‘do you think that the chaplain’s presence may work as a signal of trustworthiness to local populations?’ or ‘do you see any problems which may raise in regard to the chaplain and intelligence gathering?’). This was done in order to provide the interviewees more room to focus on the aspects they considered pertinent to the topic and not to direct the interviews too much with my preliminary understanding. This proved to be important, as it eventually highlighted the emphases and understandings of the interviewees as well as the possible gaps in their awareness concerning the approaches.

4.3 Analysis Process

The collected data has been analysed with a method called qualitative content analysis. The goal of content analysis is to create a clear, coherent, and compact picture of the phenomenon which is being studied, without losing any relevant information present in the collected data. Hence, the data is being reorganised in a way that it would be possible to draw plausible

conclusions about the phenomenon. (Tuomi & Sarajärvi 2002, 110.) In this study the analysis was loosely bound on theory, i.e. abductive in its nature: The theoretical framework provided a versatile tool for the research process as it enabled the search for material which suits to the already known themes and issues, but it did not restrict new themes or information emerging from the collected data. Therefore, it was also possible to take into account the differences between the previous research and the primary data. (Tuomi & Sarajärvi 2002, 98–99.)

In practice the research data has been processed with the help of a qualitative data analysis software called ATLAS.ti. The transcribed data was reduced into smaller segments of text which were categorised, producing 99 codes as they are called in the software, under nine themes, or code groups. The themes/code groups included the already existing six interview themes and three new themes which emerged during the interviews. For example, under the theme/code group called ‘the role of the military chaplain’ categories/codes such as ‘ecclesial work’, ‘spiritual and psychosocial support’, ‘crisis support’, and so forth, were formed. In many cases individual segments of text suited under multiple categories/codes and were therefore used in this manner. With the software, each category of segmented data, i.e. all the individual pieces of text in each category/code, were compiled into lists and further analysed. In the process some of the categories/codes clearly merged and were therefore treated as units, the contents of others were summarised as such.

As I worked on with the material, I decided to focus on two aspects of the phenomenon in my analysis: first, the broader conceptions and ideas the interviewees brought up concerning religious factors in international operations, and second, the concrete experiences they told about having with RAA/RA and RLE/RLL. The subchapters of the analysis became largely based on the interview themes: Only one of the interview themes – nr. 6 concerning the future potential of the topic – merged fully into other parts of the analysis. As to the new themes, two of them – which deal with the less discussed issues – were combined and emerged as the independent subchapter 5.3, and one – which focused on the perceived advantages that come with RAA/RA and RLE/RLL – became covered in the other subchapters and was thus left out as a separate entity.

The description provided above is obviously not an exhaustive account but rather a general synopsis of that what I did with the research material. Qualitative analysis is often a complex process taking place simultaneously at multiple levels. The researcher makes interpretations of the research data while examining it and these interpretations guide the further examination of the research data. As the research data needs to be understood in its

entirety, it might need to be re-examined, reorganised, and reinterpreted several times during the research project. (See Eskola & Suoranta 1998, 109–110.)

Throughout the research process the information the participants made available was treated as evidence, so it was assumed that the answers they gave were to a great extent honest, objective, and accurate descriptions of the things they had experienced (Alasuutari 2011, 72). This does not mean that the things which were not said would not have been considered, but there were no reasons to presume that the research participants had distorted or hidden any information. My assumption about their honesty is based on their status as public officeholders serving in trusted institutions, the considerable responsibilities they have, the similarity of their answers concerning the phenomenon under study, and the amount of healthy criticism they demonstrated during the interviews. Due to the conditions of the research permit they were not allowed to give me any classified information, but it seemed that there were only a few moments when this influenced the interviews. In such cases the interviewees also usually politely expressed, if they were not able to go into further details. In retrospect, the research participants provided me with an extensive and most useful set of data to be analysed.

4.4 Reliability, Validity, and Generalisability

Concerning the reliability and validity of this study a couple of things must be noted. On one hand the reader should be aware that the study is based on the following positivistic premises: it is assumed, firstly, that there is one objective reality, and secondly, that the phenomenon which is being studied exists. On the other hand, the fact that the possibility to reach objective knowledge or truth may and should be questioned has been taken into consideration. (Tuomi & Sarajärvi 2002, 133–134.) The participants make interpretations of the studied phenomenon and the researcher interprets the participants' interpretations (Eskola & Suoranta 1998, 102). Nevertheless, it may be argued that the reality is being observed from a given perspective, as if through certain kinds of lenses (e.g. Eskola & Suoranta 1998, 153).

As for my lenses, they may be coloured by my positive attitudes towards Finnish peacekeepers and faith-based approaches to conflict resolution, but as can be seen on the pages of this thesis, my 'faith' for them is neither uncritical nor without reservation. Throughout the research process I have kept in mind that my attitudes and opinions influence my reasoning. Therefore, I have consciously attempted to reduce their effects. For instance, I did my best not to neglect any aspects or parts of the research material while processing it,

compared it constantly with the previous research, and strove to provide well-reasoned arguments when assessing opposing views found in it.

Since in the case of qualitative research the phenomenon under study is usually limited to a specific context and time, and the research data may be interpreted and analysed in various ways, the researcher becomes a central tool in the research process himself. It is possible that other researchers would end up having different study findings no matter how faithfully they followed my research design. Therefore, many researchers argue that the transparency of the study and the recognition of the researcher's subjectivity become central factors in the assessment of the reliability and validity of the study. The reader must have enough information concerning the whole research process (Hirsjärvi & Hurme 2000, 186–189; Tuomi & Sarajärvi 2002, 20, 138; see also Eskola & Suoranta 1998, 152–153; Alasuutari 2011, 63).

For this reason, in order to increase the reliability and validity of the study, I have defined the premises, subject, and purpose of the study in detail, provided information about the study timetables, told about the research participants within the limits of the research permit, described the data collection process, and introduced the analysis of the data. I have also explained my choices concerning the focus of the study. In addition to the high level of transparency the study contains some limited data triangulation, for two different types of groups (military chaplains and commanders) of research participants with experiences from two different types of operational environments (Lebanon and Afghanistan) were interviewed in order to compare their perspectives on the topic (Tuomi & Sarajärvi 2002, 142). The lack of other forms of data triangulation may obviously be considered a challenge to the evaluation of the reliability and validity of the study. For example, I did not gain access to confidential mission reports, which could have provided additional data about Finnish chaplains' RAA/RA and RLE/RLL activities. Moreover, when one is studying a phenomenon such as the utilisation of religious expertise, Johnston's blunt remark, '[b]y its very nature, any spiritual contribution to conflict resolution will be impossible to isolate and measure' (Johnston 1994, 265), should be remembered. Therefore, I suggest that the results of this study should be approached with healthy criticism, although I am convinced that due to the reasons mentioned above, some conclusions can be drawn.

In addition to reliability and validity the question of generalisability should be addressed. It may be said that in a way all qualitative studies are case studies, and thus generalisation of the findings is not the ultimate goal of the research. Still, based on the argumentation of Jari Eskola and Juha Suoranta I would say that some generalisations may be

made in this case. According to them the proper collection of data is of importance: If the research participants have similar enough experiences of the phenomenon which is being studied, relevant expertise concerning the research questions, and interest in the study itself, the level of generalisability is likely to be better. In addition to that comparisons within the research and between the previous research and the research results improve the generalisability of the research results. (Eskola & Suoranta 1998, 49–50.) These conditions were met in this study.

Furthermore, Pertti Alasuutari writes that generalisability is not a problem, if the subject under study is an already known or a common phenomenon, even if it has not been studied extensively before. Rather than needing to reveal or prove its existence explaining and describing it becomes central. (Alasuutari 2011, 183.) The utilisation of military chaplains' religious expertise is certainly not an uncommon phenomenon, although little studied. Based on the versatility of the case studies presented in his book Moore argues that the principles of the phenomenon are generalisable to various contexts. (Moore 2013, 97–98, 240, 295.)

The role of chaplains engaging the leaders of religious communities is not a new phenomenon in operational environments. Encounters of this nature have occurred over the decades wherever chaplains have deployed with troops, regardless of nationality. In a form or another, RLE has been a successful aspect of civic engagement in active conflict zones, in peace support operations, with its emphasis on reconstruction and stabilization, and in post-conflict environments where brokered ceasefires led to mission mandates enforcing fledging peace agreements between former belligerents. (Moore 2013, 97.) The common nature of the phenomenon was noticed with the Finns as well, for the research participants seemed to be quite familiar with the concepts of RAA/RA and RLE/RLL even if some of them had little or no first-hand experience of the approaches. For these reasons, it may be concluded that the applicability of the information produced in this study is not limited to Finnish chaplains or the utilisation of religious expertise in Lebanon and Afghanistan only, but likely proves to be useful in different national contexts and other areas of operation as well. Besides, as noted already earlier, these approaches could prove to be useful outside the military realm (see e.g. Moore 2013, 258), likely serving NGO activities and civilian crisis management operations too.

Nonetheless, despite the good quality and possible wider applicability of the findings I wish to emphasise that it is not within the scope of this study to provide an all-encompassing picture of such a complex phenomenon as the utilisation of Finnish military chaplains as religious experts in Finnish Defence Forces' international operations in Lebanon and Afghanistan even throughout the studied time period. I rather aim to gather and present some insights into such an interesting topic and hope that they might serve as an inspiration for further research, discussion, and ideas.

5. Conceptions about Religious Factors in International Operations

The aim of this chapter is to introduce the broader context of the interviewees' conceptions concerning the subject of this study, hopefully helping the reader to see where they are coming from and to better evaluate their experiences discussed in the next chapter. The first subchapter presents what the study participants thought about the chaplain in international operations in general. The chaplain's role as a religious expert is situated among his other duties, and it is assessed how the chaplain's skills, competence, and orientation, as well as the personnel's attitudes towards him affect how the chaplain is and may be utilised. The second subchapter examines the interviewees' views about the significance of religious expertise and the chaplain's possibilities to contribute in this domain during the deployments. Dynamics of religion and conflict, Finnish troops' preparedness to deal with religion and culture, the ways in which religious expertise may prove to be useful, the usual challenges which one may face RAA/RA and RLE/RLL, and ideas how to improve the utilisation of the chaplain in this regard are addressed. The third subchapter highlights areas which gained less attention during the interviews but could prove to be important to be considered when the chaplain is utilised in this expert role. The questions of the chaplain's peacebuilding endeavours, relationship with intelligence gathering, attitude towards missionary work, religious status, gender, and effect on local power relations and identity issues are examined.

5.1 On the Roles of the Chaplain: 'What Is He?'

For the interviewees the ecclesial role of the chaplain was obvious, but their conceptions about its significance in international operations varied. He may be viewed primarily as a priest, or the ecclesial duties can be simply considered as one aspect of his work. (CO 1 L; CO 2 A; CH 1 L; CO 3 L; CH 2 L; CH 3 A; CH 4 L; CH 5 A; CH 6 A.) Still, it may be asked that does not the chaplain's religious identity and theological perspective in a way permeate everything he does (CH 1 L; CH 2 L; CH 5 A). In respect of working hours, it is not church services and devotions but counselling, or providing spiritual and psychosocial support, which takes most of the chaplain's time in operations. Such ministry of presence and support of personnel's capacity was deemed central by the interviewed chaplains and most valuable by the interviewed commanders. The chaplain is out there with the troops, for the troops. (CO 1 L; CO 2 A; CH 1 L; CO 3 L; CH 2 L; CH 3 A; CH 4 L; CH 5 A; CH 6 A; CO 4 A.) The chaplain's role as a welfare officer, a person designated to organise leisure activities for the troops, gained less attention during the interviews (CH 2 L; CH 3 A; CH 5 A; CH 6 A), but

this could be as it can be seen as a part of the capacity support functions (CH 3 A), and is at times intertwined with the ecclesial duties (CO 2 A; CH 5 A; CH 6 A).

As for educational activities there were clear differences among the interviewed chaplaincy's experiences. Some had not given a single lecture or presentation about the religions, culture, or history of the AO during their deployments (CH 1 L; CH 5 A; CH 6 A). It was estimated that at times this might have been because of the lack of interest among the troops (CH 1 L), sometimes simply due to the nature of the operation (CH 6 A):

[W]hen I was there, more than half of the troops were of the regular staff, and there were many who had served in multiple operations, so they did not need the chaplain's lectures that much. I held one lecture with the doctor, [...] about defusing [...] and they liked it, even if they were first like that what these doctor and chaplain are supposed to know. So, they were maybe even surprised, that wow, they do have some expertise which we do not have [...].ⁱⁱ (CH 6 A.)

For other chaplains giving such lectures had been a more or less regular activity (CH 2 L; CH 3 A; CH 4 L), even if at times it might have been more out of the chaplain's initiative, than of the organisation's demand (CH 3 A). Still, despite the differences in their experiences, the chaplain's role as an educator for the troops – which was often treated as an aspect of the advisory role – was considered being well within the realm of possibilities of the chaplain by all the interviewed chaplains, provided that the chaplain possessed relevant expertise on the subject matters. Still, critical remarks were also presented. For example, it is possible that there are other personnel or local partners with more expertise available (CO 2 A; CO 3 L; CH 6 A). In those cases, however, it might still be possible to use the chaplain as a facilitator for the educational events (CH 5 A).

In addition to the more traditional roles of deployed Finnish chaplains which have to do with ecclesial duties, spiritual and psychosocial support, welfare duties, and educational activities most of the interviewees highlighted the chaplains' role in more severe crisis support and debriefing functions (CO 1 L; CO 2 A; CH 1 L, CO 3 L, CH 2 L; CH 5 A; CH 6 A; CO 4 A), although it was acknowledged that the need for it manifests quite rarely (CH 1 L, CH 6 A).

[W]hen there are few young reservists, and nothing happens, the Crisis Support Group is not really needed as such. But it could have been needed, and if one thinks of it from the perspective of the commanders, of those who were in SKJA [Finland's International Crisis Management Contingent in Afghanistan] at that time, I felt that they did not need a chaplain for anything else than a) Christmas and b) the case that someone dies. Luckily during my time no-one got killed.ⁱⁱⁱ (CH 6 A.)

Especially the interviewed commanders saw the chaplain as an important asset in supporting personnel in cases of serious accidents or events both in areas of operation and back home. A road traffic accident, an incident of artillery fire hitting near one's base, or a sudden death of a fellow peacekeeper or a relative were named as examples of situations which might launch deeper personal crises. Having a professional listener among the troops at those times was

considered most useful. (CO 1 L; CO 2 A; CO 3 L, CO 4 A.) Again, the chaplain's focus on the well-being of the own troops was highlighted:

Well, I think that the main task is the spiritual counselling and mental support of the own troops, and would I say that... The chaplain, with other actors, is central in this debriefing and these things. It is the number one thing.^{iv} (CO 4 A.)

The symbolical value of the chaplain was also discussed during the interviews (CO 1 L, CH 1 L; CO 3 L; CH 5 A; CH 6 A). One of the chaplains stated that simply the presence of the chaplain, although he was not sure how and why, seems to be meaningful for some of the own troops. They find it somehow encouraging. He further continued that at least in the Lebanese context, where priesthood is held in high regard in the society, the presence of the chaplain is a significant signal to the locals also. (CH 1 L.) A commander who had also served in Lebanon made a similar remark. Having a chaplain with shows that the Finnish troops value similar things as the locals do (CO 1 L; CH 1 L; Moore 2013, 103). As theorised by one of the chaplains who had served in Afghanistan:

And for the locals the presence of a chaplain in this case meant that these people are in a sense decent, for they take care of the spiritual needs of the people also. So, in that way the presence of the chaplain may have significance for the troops, in the eyes of the local population, which we do not anticipate. So, in that sense, our role, until something serious hits us, is quite much about presence, and that is our role as priests in any case. With our presence we remind the people about the sacred, and the locals notice that too. [...] So, I think like that yes, we have church services or devotions or small prayers during the parades, and it may in a way build trust, that hey, these people do take these things into consideration...^v (CH 5 A.)

Another commander with experience from Lebanon noted that even a different religious affiliation does not necessarily impact negatively on the status and amount of respect the chaplain receives from the locals as a religious leader. The chaplain is usually treated differently than the regular peacekeepers by the Lebanese population. (CO 3 L; Moore 2013, 220.) Moreover, he noted that the presence of the chaplain may also signal the other Western or Christian troops about the commonalities concerning the troops' religious heritage. This might be useful, for religion has its significance among them also. (CO 3 L; Nix 2014, 44.)

If we think now that we had a battalion out there and there is no chaplain with them, then the locals will consider it weird, the Christians, and other troops like the Italians and the Irish, who are supposedly more religious [...] so yes, if we tell that we have no chaplain here, then certainly someone will frown upon it, thinking that what group of barbarians is this, coming from the North.^{vi} (CO 3 L.)

Though measuring qualities of this kind is impossible, these perceptions resonate with many scholars' remarks on the special status and added trust which a prominent religious identity may provide (see e.g. Little 2007, 440; Moore 2013, 103; Carter & Smith 2004, 296).

Whether it was due to the chaplain's possible symbolical value or not, liaising with chaplains of other contingents was seen as a natural part of his work. Chaplains do not only organise ecumenical church services or welfare events together, but might have possibilities to exchange information, plan joint activities, and support the cooperation between

contingents more broadly. (CO 2 A; CO 3 L; CH 2 L; CH 3 A; CH 4 L, CH 5 A; CH 6 A.) For example, sometimes the chaplain's knowhow may become handy when one needs to understand troops of other nationalities better (CH 4 L).

The chaplain's role as a religious – and cultural – expert brought forth a variety of opinions. All the interviewed chaplains considered it a possible role for the chaplain. It was regarded as a function, the importance of which is dependent on the situation and context in the operation concerned. Most saw advisement and religious leader engagement as tasks among other chaplain's tasks, the primacy being in the support of personnel's capacity (CH 1 L; CH 4 L; CH 5 A; CH 6 A; see e.g. Moore 2013, 102), but there were also views that in some operations they could or should constitute the primary role of the chaplain (CH 2 L; CH 3 A; see e.g. Moore 2013, 219). Moreover, it was noted that the internal and external ministries do not need to be considered mutually exclusive (CH 2 L; CH 4L).

The topic is contested. One of the interviewed commanders who had served in Afghanistan was especially sceptical of there being Finnish chaplains with enough relevant expertise (CO 2 A). In light of previous research from other contexts, it is a very relevant question (Moore 2013, 295; Nix 2014, 58–60; Cutler 2014, 107; Klocek & Hassner 2014, 179–181; Loveland 2014, 144). He saw that in the current situation the chaplain should have quite a deep understanding of Islam, for that is the religion Finnish troops have been mainly dealing with in places like the Middle East, Afghanistan, and Kosovo, and he wondered how well Finnish chaplains are educated in Islam and Islamic culture. He maintained that the required in-depth expertise and the status of an expert are not something which may be gained with a week or two of induction training, arguing that likewise those who are deployed to operations as military experts have developed their skills and knowledge for years. (CO 2 A.) On the contrary, the other commander who had served in Afghanistan had a lot more confidence in Finnish chaplains in this respect. He saw this function as the second most important role for the chaplain and argued that the proper usage of the chaplain's expertise adds to the Force Protection of the troops (CO 4 A), which is actually a common argument among those who are favourable of RAA/RA and RLE/RLL (Loveland 2014, 139).

[O]f course it depends on the person too, and on the chaplain's own expertise, but I see him also as an extremely important consultant in regard to the local religious community, [...] and let's put it this way, that the so-called role of a consultant becomes more important in operations, where religion has such a significant role, like in Afghanistan, for example.^{vii} (CO 4 A.)

This difference in opinion might have to do with the fact that the commander with the more sceptical view had served in Afghanistan in a later phase when the Finnish troops had already reduced their contact 'outside the wire' and focused on training and advising the

Afghan National Army (ANA) (CO 2 A), whereas the other had served in the country earlier when the Finnish troops saw more action and engaged with the local population, religious leaders included (CO 4 A). Both commanders who had served in Lebanon had utilised their chaplains' expertise in this manner and considered the expert role suitable, or even self-evident, for the chaplain – provided that he has the required expertise (CO 1 L; CO 3 L).

Besides the question of required skills and competences of the chaplain the discussion concerning the expert role inspired reflections about his personality, self-understanding, and orientation, as well as the leadership's attitudes towards the chaplain and religion. First, the chaplain, who usually has relatively much freedom to decide how he does his work (CH 1 L; CH 3 A; CH 4 L; CH 6 A), might not be well suited or interested in to meet with religious leaders of other faiths (CO 1 L; CH 1 L; CO 3 L; CH 4 L; CH 6 A; CO 4 A; Moore 2013, 110; Cutler 2014, 107). Second, the commander and other key personnel, depending on their conceptions and experience, might not recognise the need for and understand to use the religious expertise of the chaplain (CH 1 L; CO 3 L, CH 2 L; CH 3 A; CH 4 L; CH 5 A; CH 6 A; CO 4 A; Nix 2014 56–67; Cutler 2014, 109).

And as a professional I am annoyed that the knowhow which I have due to my training and profession is way too often confined [by the perception] that what sort of a person I am or am not, which is based on God knows what... each officer's, well usually officer's, personal experiences on other chaplains or general perceptions, that a chaplain must be like this or that. It is extremely frustrating, when one thinks of expertise, that one cannot relate [to the chaplain] with the same ordinariness as to a logistics expert or a medical doctor as a medical expert, or a lawyer as a legal expert... I think that it is sometimes a bit difficult for us to differentiate preaching from advisement.^{viii} (CH 5 A.)

Hopes were expressed by some of the interviewed chaplains that the principles and guidelines regarding RAA/RA and RLE/RLL would be discussed and clarified both among the chaplaincy itself, as well as more broadly in the FDF (CH 1 L; CH 2 L; CH 3 A; CH 5 A). One of the commanders in turn found it problematic that there is no framework which would help one to assess the chaplain's competence in the questions of religion and culture (CO 3 L). These concerns seem to be common to different militaries: without clear roles, doctrines, and guidance problems rise and more things tend to go wrong (Moore 2013, 106, 162; Keller 2014, 64–66; Kloczek & Hassner 2014, 180).

Like in other countries' contexts also (see e.g. Kloczek & Hassner 2014, 176), in addition to the roles discussed above there seems to be many other tasks the Finnish chaplain may get to handle in international operations, for he enjoys certain flexibility in the organisation. The chaplain may participate in patrols and other regular peacekeeping duties (CH 1 L; CO 3 L), plan logistics issues (CH 6 A), contribute to the troops' communications (CH 1 L; CH 6 A), run the troops' library (CH 6 A), participate in humanitarian activities (CO

2 A), and so forth. There have also been cases, in small operations, when the chaplain has been officially appointed a second role within the organisation (CH 1 L).

Finally, it could be concluded that, as seen with the expert role also, the way how the chaplain is perceived seems to have a clear effect on how his skills are used in general. This aspect is highlighted much more in the research data than in the previous research. Although all the interviewed commanders had positive attitudes towards chaplains and appreciated the contributions which they had witnessed from the ones they had served with abroad, not all the interviewed chaplains had had only positive experiences with their commanders and troops. Thus, the relationship of the commanders' and other personnel's attitudes and the chaplain's possibilities to contribute were brought up (CH 1 L; CH 3 A; CH 4 L; CH 5 A). As one of the commanders summarised it: '[S]ome know how to utilise the chaplain, some consider him as a burden'^{ix} (CO 4 A).

[T]he chaplain himself sees his role and duties in one way, but the people around him see him in another way. It is of course dependant on their experiences and views, [...]. So, someone sees that here comes the Mr. Minister of the Word and someone else sees something else like that here comes the Angel of Death. To each their perceptions. One encounters this, if not daily, at least weekly. It is one of the challenges of this job, like, 'what is that?'^x (CH 1 L.)

5.2 Religion, Religious Expertise, and Conflicts: 'It Is Not Quite an Easy Field to Play in'^{xi}

All the interviewees saw that religion needs to be taken into account in international operations. Both among those who had served in Lebanon and in Afghanistan there were reflections on how the circumstances and other factors interplay with religious elements in conflicts. As it was stated by one commander: When things are well, a person 'goes to church and spins the prayer beads [...] but when things get worse, then it gets a greater meaning and the prayer beads spin more intensely.'^{xii} (CO 3 L.) Another speculated that depending on the conflict the role of religion may range from being anything between a side factor to even among the main drivers of a conflict (CO 4 A).

One of the chaplains asserted that in some cases the religious aspect of identity is so important for the people involved in a conflict that it may not be ignored if one wants to resolve the conflict, even if other factors like ethnicity or nationality were the primary identity markers of the communities involved. (CH 2 L.) Also, even if in many cases religion does set the boundaries of communities (CO 3 L; CH 4 L), defines – at least partly – the distribution of power and resources (CO 1 L), and may be used as a tool to further exacerbate the conflict (CH 3 A; CH 4 L), it does not mean that the conflicts are mainly religious as such (CH 2 L). Religious and cultural sensitivities just need to be considered as a part of a bigger puzzle:

I don't see either, at least in most international operations, that the conflicts were essentially religious, but that where religion is a more dominant factor in ordinary people's daily lives than it is in the secularised Western countries on average, then, of course, it may be very important to get along with local religious leaders, for example. And of course, religious – as well as other – festivals just need to be taken into consideration, for out of ignorance and foolishness one may cause much damage for one's operation and its goals, if one does not understand to respect people's culture. So... I have often compared it to... if we had had bases of the British Army in Finland for the last ten years, and even if they were siding our government in principal, i.e. in theory most of the people were politically on the same side as they are, still we would not like that there were bases of the British Army. It would be wise for them also to keep a low profile towards the civilians, particularly during festivals. Should they show up, even if it was only for training purposes, with an armoured unit when we have the commemoration of the Independence Day or something else going on, it would be remembered. So, if one does not understand to be sensitive with such matters, one fails quite drastically.^{xiii} (CH 6 A.)

Two chaplains who had served in Afghanistan gave thoughts about the conflict in the country. The other saw that actors such as the Taliban and the Islamic State have clear religious motives and attempt to define who are true Muslims and not, but that most of the problems in the country are resulted due to the power games of local warlords who try to gain dominance over drug trade and other criminal activities. Geopolitics has also had its effect, as well as foreign funding. (CH 5 A.) The other made similar remarks about the situation and brought up how religious elements of the conflict might have a different significance in different parts of the country (CH 6 A). Concerning Lebanon, one commander said that religion is one of the main sources of authority and control in the region. Things happen according to the logic of religious boundaries and norms, not as defined by the state. (CO 1 L.) Furthermore, the other stated that the presence of conflicting religious groups makes the challenges of the country more complex to be solved (CO 3 L).

All the interviewed commanders maintained that religion is taken well into consideration in the international operations of the FDF and that the troops are prepared enough when deployed (CO 1 L; CO 2 A; CO 3 L; CO 4 A). During the Pre-Deployment Training (PDT) the troops gain a general understanding concerning different actors and their religious affiliations in the given AO (CO 1 L; CO 3 L). They also receive specific instructions how to behave in a culturally relevant (CO 2 A; CO 3 L) and respectful (CO 4 A) way with locals. Expertise of people who have lived in the AO is utilised as they are at times invited to provide lectures both in the PDT phase in Finland (CO 2 A), as well as during the operation abroad (CO 3 L). Information that has to do with religion is gained from various sources throughout the operation (CO 1 L) and religious sensitivities are considered when activities in the AO are planned and conducted (CO 3 L). Still, it was noted that there is also room for improvement when it comes to the utilisation of the chaplain's expertise in this domain (CO 1 L; CO 3 L; CO 4 A).

[W]e have a good amount of information, but we might have the chance to use it more efficiently in this regard. Especially when we have chaplains of the Defence Forces [i.e. regular staff], or why not reservists

also, serving as chaplains [in international operations] [...] by directing them a bit more, as it depends on that what sort of things are brought up in the training, how well you are instructed to operate there. So, there might be even need for improvement. It is, after all, a matter of managing a big system and anyone who understands anything about it is welcome to provide some additional understanding to it.^{xiv} (CO 1 L.)

The interviewed chaplains were less unanimous about this topic. The troops' ability to deal with religious elements and the basic training about culture and religion provided was both thanked and criticised. On one hand, some acknowledged that the civilian expertise within the Finnish troops is usually considerable, even if the level of knowhow of chaplains and other deployed personnel varies (CH 2 L; CH 5 A; CH 6 A). On the other hand, some considered the quality of cultural and religious expertise among the troops (CH 3 A) and the level of basic training on these issues (CH 3 A; CH 4 L) rather superficial. According to those with the more critical views, during independent rotations the troops can become quite dependent on the chaplain's contribution in this domain (CH 3 A; CH 4 L). This may be questioned: should the responsibility over religious and cultural expertise rest mainly on the shoulders of the chaplain? (CH 1 L.) Likewise, the experiences concerning the commanders' and leaderships' awareness about and attitudes towards religion and religious expertise varied considerably among the interviewed chaplains. It was felt by some that the personnel's ability to deal with the topic is sometimes influenced by their biased views on religion, which easily turn the discourse about it unbalanced. (CH 1 L; CH 5 A.)

In practice gaining a general understanding of the cultures and religions of the given AO was not considered problematic, but it was noted that religious expertise becomes more helpful and needed when one must investigate the specific cultural and religious dynamics of a certain area or village (CO 1 L; CO 3 L). It may be unlikely that the chaplain possesses this sort of information in advance (CH 1 L), but it was reminded that he might be well suited to be used in acquiring this sort of data through encounters with the local religious leaders and communities (CO 1 L; CO 3 L) – although not all the research participants would agree with this (CO 2 A). Especially in new operations learning about the conditions and creating good connections in the AO as quickly as possible was regarded as vital by couple of the research participants (CH 1 L; CO 3 L). However, simply local religious leaders' or communities lack of willingness to meet with the troops (CO 1 L; CH 1 L; CH 2 L; CH 4 L; Moore 2013, 248; Loveland 2014, 144), a bad security situation (CH 3 A; CH 5 A; CH 6 A; Keller 2014, 68–69), or a restricted nature or mandate of an operation (CH 3 A; CH 4 L; CH 5 A; CH 6 A; Keller 2014, 66–67) could hinder or obstruct RAA/RA and RLE/RLL attempts. Thus, if decided to be used, the situational factors determine, how religious expertise can be best utilised.

Well, I would say that it depends on the operation. So, the expertise, it may be either a supporting element in the background when the operation is being planned and conducted, providing information into that, or, indeed depending on the operation and the area of operation where we are, it may be even a part of the structure of the operation. So, for example, if we know that there is a village leader in the village, but that in reality the village is run by the religious leader, then this certainly has to be taken into consideration. Of course, we must show respect to the village leader, but maybe we need to also think that should we try to solve the issue by approaching the religious leader.^{xv} (CO 4 A; see also Smock 2010, 45.)

As for the ideas how the chaplain can contribute as an advisor on religious and cultural matters and builder of trust between their troops and locals, most of those presented were in line with the findings of the previous research, although there was variation in the focuses of the research participants. Some of the interviewed chaplains also brought up the potential they saw in the chaplain facilitating dialogue between local religious leaders (CH 1 L; CH 2 L; CH 4 L), but this aspect of RAA/RA and RLE/RLL is highlighted much more in Moore's and Patterson's studies than in the research data of this study. Bearing in mind the centrality of the peacebuilding aspect in their work, the lack of reflection of it might indicate that most of the research participants have not become familiar with or properly considered this feature of the approaches. This has clear implications for future research and training, especially should religious approaches be intentionally used to augment CCM (see e.g. Moore 2013, 1–10).

However, as indicated already earlier, chaplains were not the only sources of religious expertise who were mentioned in the interviews. Especially the contribution of interpreters, both Finnish nationals and locals, were brought up frequently (CH 1 L; CO 2 A; CO 3 L; CH 3 A; CH 4 L). Beyond the fact that having an interpreter with might be a necessary requirement for any meaningful exchange with locals to take place (CH 1 L), he can also be an important source of information in questions of local culture and religion (CO 2 A; CO 3 L; CH 4 L), advise personnel on conduct with locals (CO 2 A; CH 3 A), and support the commander – and other personnel – when visiting local religious leaders and occasions (CO 2 A; CO 3 L; CO 4 A). There have even been cases when interpreters have been able to solve problems with locals because they have known to whom to turn to – sometimes those being local religious leaders (CH 3 A).

Based on the interviews it may be summarised that religious expertise was conceived as an important tool in the toolbox of the troops, but there is no consensus on how much the chaplain could contribute in this respect. As far as the impact is concerned, some of the interviewees remarked that when religious elements are significant in the conflict, naturally the religious expertise of the chaplain becomes more valuable (CH 1 L; CH 4 L; CH 6 A; CO 4 A), but it was reminded that as the number of deployed chaplains is small, so is the overall effect too, even if their contributions could prove to be valuable or even crucial in individual

cases (CO 3 L; CH 6 A), let's say, if some vital religious aspects were otherwise ignored (Moore 2013, 104):

It is difficult to see, that this field would become a game changer in the future either, [...] but the critical factor by which we lose, that it may become. Because if you cross someone in that field in international operations, whether it has to do with the activities of your own troops or the outsiders, the consequences can be catastrophic.^{xvi} (CO 3 L.)

Still, the question if a good interpreter – or other experienced personnel – may be more useful than the chaplain in this regard (CO 2 A) remains open. Moreover, the utilisation of the chaplains' religious expertise appears to be conceived being somewhat of an irregular and unorganised activity by some of the interviewees (CO 1 L; CH 1 L; CO 3 L; CH 2 L; CH 3 A; CH 5 A). The ambiguity and lack of systematic training and planning in regard to the chaplain's expert role was thought to potentially hinder its full potential from being harvested (CO 1 L; CO 3 L; CH 2 L; CH 3 A; CH 5 A). The possible discontinuity of activities which comes with the short rotations and different focuses and interests of different commanders and chaplains was seen to cause challenges especially to trust building and long-term cooperation with locals (CO 1 L; CO 2 A; CH 2 L; CH 3 A; Klocek & Hassner 2014, 177). Unsurprisingly, when the interviewees were asked about the future potential of the utilisation of chaplains' religious expertise, the answers were quite diverse and resembled their current stances on the matter – if someone had a positive understanding of the efforts, he was positive about its future potential.

However, ideas how to increase the efficiency of chaplains in this field were expressed by almost everyone during their interviews. Before deployments chaplains could be provided additional training (CO 1 L; CO 3 L; CH 2 L; CH 3 A; CH 5 A; CO 4 A), and their training could be better integrated to the training of commanders and other leadership of operations (CO 1 L; CH 2 L). Moreover, their expertise could be utilised already when operations are being prepared (CO 1 L; CH 2 L). There might also be room for improvement when it comes to the training of commanders (CO 1 L), as they might not be aware how to utilise chaplains in this sense (CO 1 L; CO 4 A). In general, awareness concerning the topic would support the FDF to estimate, when this expertise would be truly needed and when not (CH 1 L; CH 2 L; CH 5 A). With respect to how chaplains are used during operations, they could be deployed with smaller contingents or military observer teams also (CH 3 A), and at times they could function primarily as religious experts (CH 3 A; CH 2 L) or even peacebuilders among local religious leaders (CH 2 L). Appointing chaplains to serve as CIMIC officers was considered an option also (CH 3 A).

As for the bigger picture, it was seen that the chaplains' expert activities should be better integrated to the FDF organisation (CH 5 A) and the broader strategy of international operations (CH 1 L; CO 3 L; CH 2 L), as well as coordinated operations wide (CO 3 L). Creating a framework where chaplains could consult other experts of religion – similarly as medical doctors do with their colleagues – was also proposed (CO 3 L). In some operations, as has been the case in KFOR in Kosovo, a chief chaplain could be added to the peacekeeping or crisis management organisation to serve as an advisor to the Force Commander, the officer who is in charge of the whole operation. While this would increase awareness about religious elements among the top leadership of the given operation, it might prove to be important from the point of view of coordinating possible peacebuilding activities also (CH 2 L; CH 4 L):

Anything that increases the understanding and acceptance among the local people, all of that has potential and is needed, and I could even think that this activity could have even more possibilities [...] if it was known how to utilise it better. But that depends on those in charge, mainly on the battalion commander, and personally I think that there should be a chief chaplain in UNIFIL who would coordinate this activity, for it may be understood as an operational matter also [...] ^{xvii} (CH 4 L.)

5.3 Possible Grey Areas: 'Maybe Walking Around There with a Cross Could Cause a Bit of Mistrust'^{xviii}

As pointed out in the previous subchapter, the chaplains who were interviewed due to their experience from Lebanon estimated there being great potential in dialogue facilitation among estranged religious communities, if the situation is ripe for it. All of them referred to how the Finnish troops had succeeded in this earlier in KFOR in Kosovo (CH 1 L; CH 2 L; CH 4 L.) A couple of challenges were brought up. First, such potential never actualises, if it is not recognised and understood to be used (CH 1 L). Second, these activities are demanding and sensitive. They, like other RLE/RLL activities, contain risks. Should the chaplain attempt to mediate and facilitate dialogue between local religious leaders efficiently, it requires, in addition to the willingness of locals, a broader vision in the organisation, training, time, and resources. (CH 2 L.)

I wanted to think that it needs to be expressly planned and coordinated, so that is not like that it is nice for the Chaplaincy to meet with the religious leaders, but the input should come from somewhere else. Or at least on my opinion it would be nice, if it was a part of some greater whole^{xix}. (CH 1 L.)

One of the interviewed chaplains maintained that the broader vision of the organisation defines if there will be the required long-term commitment and continuity for peacebuilding – for example so that armed forces launch the process of dialogue between local religious leaders and the responsibility to support it is later given to civilian organisations (CH 2 L; Moore 2013, 256). He was the only one of the interviewees who considered the chaplain's peacebuilding potential to this extent, which adds to the plausibility of the claims of there being room for broadening the vision in terms of RAA/RA and RLE/RLL within the FDF.

Pertaining to other caveats of concern, when the chaplain studies local religious dynamics and interacts with local population, he acquires information (CO 1 L; CH 1 L; CO 3 L; CH 2 L; CH 4 L; CO 4 A) which may turn relevant from the point of view of intelligence actors also (CH 2 L; CH 3 A). This aspect was problematised by two of the interviewed chaplains, who opposed the idea of using the chaplain for any intelligence gathering activities. Like Moore – and many others – they saw that it would be in contradiction with the status of the chaplain and work against any efforts of building trust and mutual understanding between foreign troops and locals. The meetings with local religious leaders should be used to produce something good between the actors. (CH 1 L; CH 2 L; Moore 2013, 240–245.) Further resembling Moore’s ideas, one of them maintained that such peace-oriented and faith-based activities are in the core of any operation and should not be compromised. When the chaplain can gain the trust among different parties of a conflict and promote values like peace and human dignity, working openly and honestly, it is the way he supports the goals of his operation most efficiently. This capacity will be lost, if the locals become suspicious of the chaplain. He regarded the provision of general information, even to the intelligence actors, less problematic, although much depends on how the information is being used. (CH 2 L; Moore 2013, 240–245.)

One of the commanders who had served in Afghanistan maintained that in the Finnish context the attempts to gain understanding of religious elements, among other factors, has firstly and foremostly to do with the ability to convey respect. He saw that the Finnish troops have been particularly good in this and hoped that they could promote this approach in international operations in the future also, even if Finland is a small actor in the field. Finnish troops have been able to show local populations that they are not forcing their own agendas when it comes to the ways of life in their countries. (CO 4 A.) He opposed the idea of forcefully pushing the Western models of democracy and civilisation on non-Western nations, seeing it as counterproductive for the operations and their goals:

[A]nd that is, on my opinion, all in all a big challenge in crisis management and peacekeeping, that we, representatives of the Western countries, go into a fully different culture, and we go and... we basically dis the whole country’s history, traditions, and cultures, and go and kind of force our own [...]xx (CO 4 A.) If his views truly represent the Finnish approach accurately, it might, at least partly, explain why the issues of influence activities and intelligence gathering were not such a big deal among the interviewees like it seems to have been in the North American context (see e.g. Moore 2013, 240–245; Keller 2014, 65–66).

One must be careful with religious agendas as well. Although it is possible that the topic could raise some questions about the state of religious freedom within the armed forces and

the society, which is an important concern in the US (Klocek & Hassner 2014, 183), among the research participants the idea of the chaplain engaging in any proselytization activities among local populations was opposed – if the topic surfaced. Although the chaplain is always a representative of his own faith community, missionary work among locals was seen as not being a part of his job description in international operations. (CH 2 L; CH 4 L.) The chaplain's possible inability to distinguish between the different roles of his may cause at least two sorts of problems. First, biased attitudes towards locals would hinder him from working efficiently as an advisor (CO 3 L; CH 4 L), and second, attempts of converting them could raise opposition obstructive to the mission objectives (CH 2 L).

One of the interviewed chaplains maintained that there needs to be enough training for the deployed chaplains that they understand their role as religious experts and known how to bypass divisive religious issues politely and respectfully, should they raise. There must be room for discussion and disagreement, but one must realise that going into certain theological questions can bring about difficult feelings. (CH 2 L.)

[S]o that you for example know that if some sheikh asks you then [...] 'is Jesus also God's son', that it may be a wise answer that 'as Christians we think like this, but I do not want to go into it, I won't start justifying it' [...]. It is actually interesting how do you answer to that. 'These are those religious questions, that Christians do think like this but [...] I know that from your perspective it can be shocking'. [...] But the idea about it, that on one hand people are allowed to ask anything, but then because of one's role one has to know that this question is something we do not need to start dealing with. One respects it, gives a general answer, stays sincere: 'Yes, we are Christians. You certainly know what we think of these sorts of things, but I came to meet you because I wish to show you respect, give you the space as religious and societal actors, and maybe it is not good to get into this...' ^{xxi} (CH 2 L.)

He emphasised, similarly to some American chaplains (Cutler 2014, 106; Loveland 2014, 143), that this does not mean that one needs to compromise his religious identity in order to be a suitable person to work with indigenous populations. He speculated that doing so could even cause some loss of credibility in the eyes of conservative religious people, although it is still most likely less risky than, for instance, attempting to convert anyone. In his opinion one should just politely express, where his own religious boundaries are, and explain that he respects others' right to do the same. He asserted that it is possible to get along and respect each other even if there is a strong disagreement about spiritual matters. (CH 2 L.)

However, the matter is not straightforward. Even if the chaplain knew very well what he was doing, working professionally and respectfully, it is possible that in some cases, for example in some Muslim majority countries, his presence could still be considered a negative thing by locals. It would raise doubts or ill will. (CO 2 A; CO 3 L; CH 2 L; CH 4 L; Klocek & Hassner 2014, 184; Hansen 2012, 26–27.) As will be seen with the case of Finnish experiences in Afghanistan, the presence of foreign chaplains, Finnish ones included, may also be used against peacekeepers in the form of rumours about the Western troops

proselytising the locals (CH 5 A; CH 6 A). Thus, assessing when it is the right time for the chaplain to try to get in touch with local religious leaders can be challenging (CH 2 L). As for how to get rid of the possible tensions which come with Finnish military chaplains' Christian status, it was speculated by one commander that in the future it might be possible to have Finnish imams, who focused on working with locals, serving with Finnish troops. Especially if they knew local languages and cultures relevant to the operations, they might have better chances to build trust between Finnish peacekeepers and locals than Christian chaplains. (CO 2 A; Hansen 2012, 25.) However, as noted by one of the interviewed chaplains, some of the troops' atheist or agnostic orientations might cause challenges as well, if promoted openly in places like Lebanon or Afghanistan (CH 1 L), so it may be argued that the issue does not concern the chaplain only.

The question of female chaplains was also brought up, as two of the commanders pondered how the dynamics that come with them would work out in religiously conservative environments. One of them stated that having a female chaplain with could be a positive signal for local women, as they would see a woman in such a role, but he was not sure if her presence was helpful in any of the negotiations with local men (CO 3 L). The other saw that as men might not want to discuss with her at all – which might be the case with other women serving in operations too – one might need to reconsider how the chaplain's expertise is utilised in this sort of situations:

[H]ere is, in my opinion, maybe the biggest challenge in this. I think that the chaplain must be used, and it has to be in the way that if I, as a battalion commander, go to meet with a religious leader, I do not go there alone, but I have the chaplain with me. But as said, then we have this question that how you do kind of break the ice, if you go there with a female chaplain. So is it better that I encounter the religious leader [alone], as the female chaplain has briefed me well enough for this, as well as provided support and background information, and, after I have had the meeting, we will sit down, and she will kind of analyse it, and will provide me the results of the analysis for to be used in the next meeting.^{xxiii} (CO 4 A.)

In any case, even if it was not problematised during the interviews, addressing the dominance of older males in this field is needed for a better inclusion of women and youth into such faith-based initiatives (Klocek & Hassner 2014, 183).

What was left with very little attention also, was religion's relationship with power. As Klocek and Hassner rightly note, it should be considered carefully that on which basis the troops interact and with which religious communities. In addition to the questions of inclusivity it has to do with the possibility of unintentionally strengthening structural conditions which foster enmity. Also, it should be asked if RLE/RLL may reify religious identities (Klocek & Hassner 2014, 183), and potentially make conflicts more difficult to be solved. Only one of the interviewed chaplains touched this aspect of identity issues. He noted that people tend to start to make generalisations about others during conflicts, perceiving them

as essentially bad in nature, and maintained that it is challenging to overcome this phenomenon as it requires readiness for self-criticism and possible opposition from one's own community by those who are involved in the process. Still, he saw that religious leaders have a lot of potential to counter these effects due to their authority and capacity to rehumanise others. (CH 2 L.)

As implied by some of the interviewees, all these questions contain risks which require attention. Still, most of the interviewees did not discuss and assess the chaplain's possible peacebuilding activities among local religious leaders and communities, the relationship of the chaplain and intelligence gathering, or the significance of his attitude towards missionary work. Only one chaplain considered these aspects more thoroughly during his interview (CH 2 L). The possible challenges which may come with the chaplain's religious status or gender were also left with little scrutiny. This was also the case with the risks that come with when one is dealing with identity issues. However, based on the research data it is impossible to say whether these questions have been sufficiently addressed before Finnish chaplains have been utilised as religious experts. Maybe the interviewees would have had well-informed opinions about these issues, had they been addressed with more specific questions. For example, avoiding giving an impression that peacekeepers are gathering intelligence – or doing anything else which may be considered disrespectful – is a general concern for the troops (CO 3 L) and therefore possibly too obvious to be thought of in this context. Although the limitations of the Chaplaincy Guidelines, as well as some interviewees' notions about the unclarity concerning the chaplain's expert role, little training in regard to the topic, and irregularity of the chaplains' expert activities may further imply that the attention to these questions has been limited, additional research would be needed to determine, what the situation has been.

6. Experiences of Religious Expertise from the Field

This chapter focuses on the interviewees' experiences of RAA/RA and RLE/RLL activities in Lebanon and Afghanistan. The first subchapter addresses their training and preparations before the deployments. It was found that there have not been any specific courses which would have prepared the interviewed chaplains to advise personnel on religious and cultural matters or to encounter local religious leaders, yet there have been some elements in different educational settings which were considered useful in this respect. In addition to these elements some challenges, the training of commanders, and suggestions for improvement are examined. The second subchapter presents findings on advisement on religion and culture in the two countries. It seems that the perceptions concerning the need for information about religion and culture have defined if each chaplain's expertise has been utilised or not. How these perceptions are formed and how RAA/RA activities have looked like are the central questions throughout the subchapter. The third subchapter analyses the experiences of RLE/RLL activities during the deployments. Based on the research data the level of willingness of the locals, the current security situation, and the nature of each operation have largely defined the chaplain's possibilities to encounter local religious leaders and communities, but personal qualities have had a role in it too. What was possible to be done and what not is being discussed along the way.

6.1 Before the Deployments: 'As for Training, It Has Been a Matter of the Chaplain's Own Activeness – To Understand the Role and Familiarise Oneself with It'^{xxiii}

The interviewed chaplains considered that theological studies provide the basis for the Finnish chaplain's expertise (CH 1 L; CH 2 L; CH 3 A; CH 4 L; CH 5 A; CH 6 A). During his time as a university student one does not necessarily specialise in topics that are useful in international operations, but the studies should give the chaplain at least a good general understanding of religions and their dynamics (CH 1 L; CH 5 A; CH 6 A), build in him kind of 'religious literacy' (CH 1 L). As for advantageous subjects and specialisations, the Study of Religions was mentioned as an example by most of the chaplains (CH 1 L; CH 2 L; CH 3 A; CH 5 A; CH 6 A). Otherwise it was noted that further training of the church or mission organisations can become helpful in multicultural environments (CH 6 A), and one may acquire relevant knowledge and skills through work also (CH 1 L; CH 4 L). One of the chaplains speculated that due to the nature of their work chaplains and priests might be better than average prepared to encounter people of various backgrounds (CH 1 L). In the military

training of the interviewed commanders, religion, culture, religious expertise, or the chaplain's expert role in international operations have been little or not at all addressed (CO 1 L; CO 2 A; CO 3 L; CO 4 A). Most of them brought up the role of Finnish general education and acknowledged its importance in building their understanding of religion (CO 2 A; CO 3 L; CO 4 A).

Local religious and cultural issues are on the agenda of some of the courses in which chaplains may get to participate prior to their deployments. All the interviewed chaplains who were deployed to Afghanistan were provided a possibility to participate in the International Support Staff Officer's Course (INTSUPSOC), which has been organised in the Nordic Defence Cooperation (NORDEFECO) framework in Norway. One of them could not participate in the course before his tour (CH 3 A), the others did. The course was aimed for personnel who work in the medical, legal, staff, and ecclesial fields. The course included joint training for all but also specified lectures for each of the four groups. As a part of their specific training chaplains were provided some insights into RLE/RLL activities. (CH 5 A; CH 6 A.) Beyond INTSUPSOC some had had possibilities to participate in other international (CH 1 L; CH 4 L) and national (CH 4 L; CH 5 A) courses which have touched relevant topics. For example, the NATO and Partner Chaplain Operations Course organised in the NATO School Oberammergau, located in Germany, has addressed the chaplain's operational roles (CH 4 L). None of the commanders brought up any courses they saw having been useful for themselves in the view of religion and culture (CO 1 L; CO 2 A; CO 3 L; CO 4 A).

Referring to the specialised courses, one of the interviewed chaplains found that debriefing and crisis counselling trainings are also relevant for RLE/RLL as both support one's ability to deal with people in a constructive manner. He saw that providing chaplains further training on dialogue and interaction skills would be useful. In civilian context relevant courses would comprise of those which have to do with themes such as reconciliation or psychotherapy. As for military training, he maintained that CIMIC training would give chaplains tools to work with local populations. (CH 2 L.) According to Moore, the latter has been done in the context of New Zealand's PRT contribution in Afghanistan, where chaplains had been integrated – with a clear mandate, proper training, and long-term planning – into humanitarian and development tasks among the local population (Moore 2013, 214–216.) Another chaplain proposed organising additional training for chaplains in cooperation with universities. The training could cover topics like interreligious dialogue and relevant languages. (CH 3 A.) These kinds of ideas have been implemented in the US, where some chaplains have been educated in interreligious and intercultural issues, as well as conflict

resolution (Loveland 2014; 145). The third one stated that chaplains should be provided Human Intelligence (HUMINT) training (CH 4 L). However, based on the research data and the studies of Moore and Patterson it can be speculated that this proposal could raise some controversy or at least require some discussion how the skills provided in this training would be utilised during the deployments (CH 1 L; CH 2 L; Moore 244–245; Klocek & Hassner 2014, 176).

For Finnish troops the PDT, which is provided as a specific training for each operation, contains some instructions on religion and culture. The experience of the interviewed chaplains was that for them this training did not provide much when it comes to the aspect of religious expertise and its utilisation in operations (CH 1 L; CH 2 L; CH 3 A; CH 4 L; CH 5 A; CH 6 A), except maybe for the context specific information about local villages and tribes and their religious and cultural affiliations (CH 5 A). ‘I was there teaching rather than learning, what comes to this engagement with religion and culture’^{xxiv} (CH 3 A). In general, they seem not to have received much of task-specific instructions during their PDT phases, apart from spending a few moments with the chaplain of Pori Brigade (CH 1 L; CH 4 L; CH 6 A). It was acknowledged that otherwise the PDT can be very useful for chaplains, especially for those reservists who have not served in a military environment for a while (CH 4 L; CH 6 A).

Regarding the challenges of RAA/RA activities that may come due to lack of training, two of the chaplains reminded that it has an effect on how useful pieces of advice the chaplain may provide (CH 2 L; CH 5 A). Without being properly informed it is harder for him to grasp how religious elements interplay with other factors in any given conflict (CH 5 A):

It is necessary for a theologian or a chaplain as well, if you ought to give advices, it is necessary that you have time to get familiarised and you receive information about local conditions and in this way you get into it, your understanding grows, so... [...] It is actually quite an important thing to be taken into consideration, when one speaks about the chaplain’s preparations or the chaplain’s training for the task, for maybe we do it a bit superficially, like that ‘you are a chaplain, you do know this’.^{xxv} (CH 5 A.)

To name an example of the shortages related to RLE/RLL, not all the interviewed chaplains had received training for Key Leader Engagement during their PDT phase. There are two reasons for this. First, according to the knowledge of one of the interviewees it used not to be a part of the planned training of the chaplain earlier. Second, at times the chaplain, like other personnel, might need to be recruited to the operation with a short notice when someone drops out, and there is simply no time for him to go through the full PDT. (CH 1 L; CH 2 L.) Notwithstanding the fact that the amount of interaction training for chaplains has increased over the years, it may yet be questioned if such a still relatively modest input makes a difference, especially should the individual chaplain’s strengths and interests lie elsewhere.

‘[I]f his background education in these things is weak, it is difficult to mould it into a different shape during the Pre-Deployment Training.’^{xxvi} (CH 1 L.)

For the interviewed commanders the PDT had been more useful. They saw that it had helped them to comprehend the role and significance of religion and culture in the areas of operation, as well as to understand better how to deal with it. (CO 1 L; CO 2 A; CO 3 L; CO 4 A.) Still, it was noted by one of them that the chaplain’s religious expertise and its utilisation is not necessarily addressed too well during the PDT. On his opinion highlighting his role and integrating his training more into the training of the commander could foster the utilisation of the chaplain’s expertise. (CO 1 L)

[T]hen the area in which, it may be said now afterwards, this aspect should be slightly boosted is this prior operation-specific training in Finland. His [the chaplain’s] role and familiarity with it could be brought up more clearly. Then it could have been, I emphasise it could have been, that we would have figured out something more [during the operation]. Difficult to say, but [...] he could have been more present there where I was trained, that he sees and hears all those things... Sure, he was present in some [parts of the training], but not all.^{xxvii} (CO 1 L.)

The proposed arrangements are not fully unusual. In the US Army and Marine Corps chaplains take part in the preparation and planning of operations (Nix 2014, 52–53, 55–56).

Generally, the different groups of interviewees seemed not to be too aware of how and how much RAA/RA and RLE/RLL issues are considered in the educations and trainings of the other group, which might explain some of the experiences of poor cooperation. As one of the chaplains expressed it, it must be made sure that the chaplain and other personnel ‘speak the same language’^{xxviii} (CH 5 A). As for similar concerns, some of the interviewees speculated if the chaplains of the FDF’s regular staff had a better basis to serve in international operations (CO 1 L; CH 2 L; CH 4 L), some others simply noted that different backgrounds may cause some variation but pointed out that the outcomes still depend a lot on the person (CH 1 L), like is the case with other personnel groups also (CO 4 A; Nix 2014, 56).

[T]his very moment we have chaplains serving as regular staff, military chaplains, I do not mean these chaplains, who are deployed to crisis management operation from the reserve, but [I mean] these chaplains of the FDF [...] We have plenty of good chaplains, but then we have few chaplains that I know that if someone of these few chaplains was deployed somewhere, let’s say, that I was a battalion commander in some operation, in Afghanistan for instance, having a chaplain like that with me would be the last thing I would like to do.^{xxix} (CO 4 A.)

Also, although currently it might be that the chaplains of the FDF’s regular staff have a better access to relevant military courses and trainings than the reservists, this issue could be addressed by simply providing the reservists more of such possibilities (CH 4 L).

In order to further increase their readiness to work in religiously and culturally different conditions some of the interviewees mentioned reading relevant literature (CO 2 A; CH 2 L; CH 3 A; CH 4 L; CH 6 A; CO 4 A) and contacting people with previous experience from operations (CH 3 A; CH 4 L) out of their own interests. One also receives a lot of practical

hints, including remarks on local religion and culture, during the hand-over-take-over phase, when the predecessor instructs the successor for a week or two in the AO before saying goodbyes to the operation from his part (CO 1 L; CO 2 A; CH 1 L; CH 4 L; CH 5 A). Still, it is a short time and there are many other things to be learned too (CH 1 L).

The interviewees' reports on their experiences concerning the task-specific instructions and training – or rather the lack of them – support their notions and arguments about the to a certain degree irregular and unorganised state of RAA/RA and RLE/RLL activities within the context of the FDF's international operations. Arguably, without proper guidelines and training these endeavours become more dependent on the personal interests and inclinations of the people involved, increasing the chance of there being more variation in how things are done in the field. The Finnish experiences thus resemble the earlier state of affairs in North America in this regard. (Moore 2013, 161–162; Cutler 2014, 115; Kloczek & Hassner 2014, 179–181, Loveland 2014, 140–141).

6.2 Advising Personnel – Ready When Needed, if Perceived to Be Needed

In Lebanon providing advice on religion seems to have been quite a regular endeavour for Finnish chaplains. Even if one of the interviewed chaplains who had served in Lebanon stated that he was asked very little advice concerning local religions, he acknowledged providing some support for the personnel before their meetings with the priests of the local Christian communities, as well as answering some individual questions his troops might have had. He saw that as UNIFIL has been present in the country for such a long time, there were not many surprising elements in the operation anymore. Standard procedures on how to deal with various issues, such as local religious festivities, had already evolved, and therefore he had felt that there was not much demand for the chaplain's advice. He described advisement as a resource which had been available, should there have been a need for it, and should it have been decided to be used. (CH 1 L.)

The other two interviewed chaplains had more versatile experiences, as religion was on the agenda both in formal and informal settings during their deployments. Both told having regularly discussed about the local religious dynamics with their commanders and other personnel. A lot of effort was seen especially for finding new ways how to reach the local Shia religious leaders, as showing impartiality towards the locals was considered central to the operation and as both chaplains saw potential in increased dialogue with and between the local religious communities. Moreover, both mentioned having organised chaplain's trips

with educational content for their troops, so their knowledge was used in this fashion also. (CH 2 L; CH 4 L.)

[W]hen I organised my chaplain's trips, we visited, for example, [...] a monastery in order to get familiarised into it, and we had a communion there [...] so they are, also in the religious sense, educational events for the peacekeeper.^{xxx} (CH 4 L.)

Both interviewed commanders who had served in Lebanon had had their chaplains to study the religious dynamics of the AO and advise them before visiting the locals and their events (CO 1 L; CO 3 L). After the meetings the chaplains could further help the commanders to analyse what was being discussed and plan future actions based on the analysis (CO 3 L). In addition to providing advice for them, their chaplains also supported other personnel in a similar manner (CO 1 L; CO 3 L). It was acknowledged that, beyond the chaplain, the interpreter can have a role in this too (CO 3 L).

None of the interviewed chaplains who had served in Afghanistan had experiences of advising the commander or other personnel on religion or culture during their deployments in the country, apart from one of the chaplains providing small lectures for the troops (CH 3 A). They saw that this was partly due to the nature of the operation, partly due to the lack of interest among the troops. All of them served at a time when the operation had already calmed down as ISAF had passed on the responsibility over security to the local security forces. (CH 3 A; CH 5 A; CH 6 A.) During their rotations few informal discussions and exchanges about religion had taken place with the troops (CH 5 A; CH 6 A), but the chaplains' contributions can be called minimal. Overall the provision of information about religion and culture for the troops seems to have been vague:

In Afghanistan, there was nothing for the troops, and the soldiers were not even interested in some... practically in anything. The little handbook, 'Welcome to ISAF Operation' or what was it called, in it there was less than a page of information about Islam and the political situation of Afghanistan, and that was really the only thing that was generally distributed for the soldiers.^{xxxi} (CH 3 A.)

Still, out of their own interests at least two of the chaplains had tried to gain a deeper understanding of the conditions they were serving in. One mentioned that he had learned a lot about the local culture due to the plentiful discussions he had had with a local trader who was doing business next to the Finn's base (CH 6 A), another told that he had invited three experts to provide lectures for the Finnish troops (CH 5 A):

So, in that situation I organised three small lectures to be held alongside the weekly briefings [...] I was dealing with the Swedish and the Germans there, and others as well, there were the Dutch and all others [...]. The Germans had one of these, what do you call him, a cultural officer, or something like this, and he was well informed what was happening in that region in general, and I asked him to hold a lecture about the things he could share for the troops. Then I asked one policeman, there was the EU police operation there, so I asked the policeman there to tell what they do in cooperation with the local police. Then I asked one who works in the UN relief activities to tell what they do, so that I could give the troops perspectives to the world outside the gates. This was the idea behind it, why I organised such lectures. In a way I used the connections, which I was able to build, I tried to use them for the benefit of the troops.^{xxxii} (CH 5 A.)

Also, the same chaplain told about having had a chance to meet with two Muslim imams and one Religious and Cultural Affairs officer of the ANA and gotten an idea of their work. This department seems to be the ANA's embodiment of religious expertise:

[T]his Office for Religious and Cultural Affairs, it goes to the villages and talks about what ISAF troops are doing, with the emphasis that the ISAF troops are not here to proselytise, they are here to support the Nation of Afghanistan, and yes, Islam is taught to our [Afghan National Army] soldiers, yes, they go to pray to the mosques on Fridays. And in this way, they also want to counter these rumours spread by the Taliban, [like] that soldiers who cooperate with Westerners are not real Muslims, and that they have gone astray from the true faith, and that ISAF is here to conduct a crusade.^{xxxiii} (CH 5 A.)

While one of the interviewed chaplains was serving in Afghanistan when the Finnish troops were still stationed in various locations outside the main base and he considered having had the potential of advising the personnel on religious and cultural matters, he saw there was no need for it at the time. The decreasing level of contact with the locals meant that there was less demand for advice on how to deal with these issues. Moreover, many of the Finns serving in the country had experience of multiple operations and were thus already familiar with local religious and cultural sensitivities. The only way he had to consider these matters himself was by making sure that none of his church leaflets, which were sometimes printed in English and contained passages of the Bible, would not end up into the garbage bins. It was assessed that this could have offended the locals, who hold also the Christian scriptures in high regard. In general terms, his main concern during the operation was how to reach his own troops. He said having spent a considerable number of hours just for organising transportations and travelling between the different outposts so that he could provide the troops possibilities for church services, counselling, and some leisure activities. Also, as the number of Finnish troops was decreasing, it meant that everyone was given additional miscellaneous tasks along the way. Outposts were closed and equipment packed. (CH 6 A.) One of his stories about a visit to an outpost which was soon to be abandoned illustrates the at times less glamorous nature of the chaplain's work:

[W]hen you needed to participate in the upkeep of the camp, and we were closing it and packing and doing other stuff, it was a common source for laughter that the chaplain is burning books. [...] I had that kind of old gigantic oil barrel in which I burned books, because it was pointless to take any unnecessary weight with, and maps, because they had to be disposed for operational reasons. It happened to be a suitable job for the chaplain when everyone was packing and tearing down something. So, this [title of a] religious advisor sounds very impressive, considering what I was doing there, burning books and baking waffles.^{xxxiv} (CH 6 A.)

The two other chaplains had more stationary experiences in Afghanistan, as at the time of their deployments all the Finnish troops stayed at the same base as they did (CH 3 A; CH 5 A). One of them said that he might have been able to contribute by providing some perspectives on religious issues had he had the chance to participate at least in the briefings of units like FHTs (Field Human Teams) or MOTs (Mobile Observation Teams) (CH 5 A). Like

his colleague, also the other chaplain felt that he had been side-lined in the crisis management organisation (CH 3 A).

The commander who had served in Afghanistan during the earlier and more active phase told having good experiences of advisement by the chaplains he had served with. They had been able to provide him relevant information about the local religious leaders and dynamics, prepare him for the meetings with the religious leadership, and support him during the meetings. (CO 4 A.)

[B]ecause those chaplains, with whom I was working, they had the information and understanding of Islam, so they were able to brief me in a way that I knew, for example, how to behave. And on the other hand, during those moments they could, so to say, translate for me those things this religious leader spoke about, what do these things mean. As if, translating religious dialect into an understandable language.^{xxxv} (CO 4 A.)

He further added that, had he understood it at the time, he should have used his chaplains for providing his troops some additional training during the deployment. In his opinion having some basic training about religion and culture in the PDT phase only is not enough, but there needs to be regular revision throughout the operation. Reminding the troops about right conduct has a pre-emptive effect. (CO 4 A.) The other commander who had served in Afghanistan later had not asked advice on religion or culture from his chaplain. He told that his local Afghan interpreter was able to provide him the necessary information about the religious and cultural matters, as well as to help him to greet the imams stationed in the ANA base where the Finnish troops trained and mentored the local troops. For him the chaplain was an advisor only in matters concerning the wellbeing of the Finnish troops. (CH 2 A.)

The perceptions about the current need for information about religion and culture among the personnel seem to have defined whether the chaplain's advices on religion and culture have been sought after in either country. These perceptions have been likely formed of several factors like the skills and orientation of the chaplain, the prevailing security situation, the nature of the operation, the personnel's awareness concerning the topic, individuals' attitudes, interpersonal issues, and the availability of other sources of knowledge, such as interpreters or other experienced personnel. Still, even if there is neither unanimity about the topic among the interviewees nor standard practices which may be identified within the scope of this study, some of the experiences speak for the potential of using Finnish chaplains as advisors on religious and cultural issues.

The chaplain does not need to be perceived as an advisor to the commander only in regard to the local population, but also to the own troops (CO 1 L). Especially when the chaplains have been able to join the regular patrols and other routine duties of the troops, like the case has been at least in Lebanon, they have had chances to observe both how the locals

and the own troops are doing. When the chaplain is active in participating in what the troops do, it helps him to do his work as a counsellor better. (CO 3 L.)

[A]s I said earlier, I think that the participation in peacekeeper's basic patrolling, guard duties, then one is at the fifty [the name of the outpost], he [the chaplain] might have been even a week at the outpost observing... it makes a difference, not only because he got the personal contact with the local population and their events, but also because he was a part of the peacekeeping troops, so when some guy comes to talk about the boredom of patrolling [...] so the guy knows, that the chaplain has been five times in the same patrol with him, so he [the chaplain] knows what he [the guy] is talking about. And that is an important element. [...] that you may talk about it, and listen, and give advice and tips during counselling [...] it requires that you know, what the work is about, and that is very important in it.^{xxxvi} (CO 3 L.)

Dichotomic understandings can be challenged elsewhere also. For instance, ethical advisement, which did not gain much attention in this study, may touch both aspects, the chaplain's internal and external ministries (CH 2 L; CH 4 L). It is certainly valuable for the well-being of the troops, but encouragement and guidance to ethical conduct will likely indirectly support any interaction with local populations, which again might help peacekeepers to fulfil their mission objectives more efficiently. In stressful conditions the risk of soldiers building xenophobic attitudes or mistreating locals increases (see Wester 2014, 132–133). Chaplains are known – or at least usually expected – to address these issues by calls for moderation and respect for human dignity (see Loveland 2014, 131–132).

6.3 Engaging Religious Leaders and Communities – A Sum of Many Factors

Finnish chaplains' interaction with local Christian priests and communities has been recurrent in Lebanon. They have met with the priests in various settings like in official meetings with the representatives of local municipalities (CO 1 L; CO 3 L), church services (CO 1 L; CH 1 L; CO 3 L; CH 2 L; CH 4 L), other community events and festivities (CO 1 L; CH 1 L; CH 2 L), and at the homes of the priests (CH 2 L). In addition to visiting the local priests with their commanders and regular patrols some chaplains have accompanied CIMIC teams and encountered the local priests in that context (CO 1 L; CH 1 L; CO 3 L). One of the commanders noted that the local churches are often involved in CIMIC projects, and therefore having the chaplain to participate in CIMIC activities works well (CO 1 L). In order to further increase interaction invitations have been extended to the local priests by the troops also, and they have payed visits to the Finnish base for parades and meetings with the commanders (CH 2 L). When it comes to the interaction with Shia sheiks, the situation has been the complete opposite. They seem to have been very reluctant to meet with the Finnish chaplains who have served in the country. (CO 1 L; CH 1 L; CO 3 L; CH 2 L; CH 4 L.)

One of the chaplains described the encounters with the Lebanese priests as one of the most interesting and rewarding experiences during his deployment and saw it as a good

possibility to contribute to the relations between the peacekeeping forces and the local population. Likewise, he enjoyed encountering other locals too. Sometimes possibilities for interaction rose rather spontaneously when he and other peacekeepers were invited to visit local homes after church services or other events in the villages. While participating in regular patrols and organising chaplain's trips there were possibilities for him to interact with the Muslim population also, and he recalled that once he got invited for a breakfast to a local village by one of the Muslim workers of the Finnish base. Although he did not manage to meet with the local Shia sheiks – despite multiple efforts and his commander's support – he assessed that otherwise the Finnish troops' interaction with the local communities of different religious backgrounds was balanced. On a broader scale the situation looks different also, as during his time the Force Commander of UNIFIL had met with the religious leaders of all different communities in a round table discussion. He did not think that the reason for the sheiks' reluctance to meet with him was likely due to any religious problems, but rather pressures from their own local communities, such as the possible loss of credibility among one's own people, if one was too closely involved with the UN troops. Even if he saw that 'the doors started to already open slightly'^{xxxvii} towards the Shia sheiks, and his commander had promoted the idea of such a meeting to a local mayor, it did not come to pass. He felt that had he had a bit more of time and resources, the situation might have been different. (CH 2 L.)

I claim that the resources... as a chaplain I did not have the resources, with the interpreters, to search more diligently for a potential Shia leader and explain it well, encounter, maybe contact the UNIFIL Headquarters [and ask] how they have reached the leaders.^{xxxviii} (CH 2 L.)

Another chaplain estimated that he had attended a Maronite mass in a near-by village approximately once a month, as well as met with the municipality leadership and priests of the Christian communities in the AO regularly. During the masses he was usually invited to join the altar service. He was also asked to preach in the church once but had to cancel the event as he had gotten sick. Like his other colleague, he also actively tried to meet with the Shia sheiks, but his attempts did not avail due to what he perceived as the lack of willingness of the Shia communities. During his deployment it was even planned that the Finnish troops would host a meeting for the local religious leaders, Christians and Muslims alike, but it never took place. He had learned that in some of his commander's meetings with the local leadership there had been sheiks present, but he had not participated in those meetings himself. (CH 4 L.)

The third chaplain who served in Lebanon had a similar experience and understanding of the Shia religious leaders and their lack of willingness to meet. He did not have any

encounters with them and speculated that maybe they have determined along the years that these meetings are not of use for them. They don't necessarily perceive to gain anything out of these meetings. Foreign chaplains come and go, they stay. His experiences with the local priests and communities were mainly positive, but he also brought up that one could end up in more challenging discussions with the local Christians because of the differences how Christianity manifests in Finland and in Lebanon. (CH 1 L.) He recalled an encounter when someone had challenged him with difficult questions:

[H]ow would I say this... at least in our terms it [Christianity] is rather conservative [in Lebanon], and therefore you are often watching your words. For I have been in a situation, when there has been a person who has known things about what's going on in the North, so then you are there, watching your words and trying to answer questions about same sex marriages and female priests and the like. So, you must know your own culture and you have to understand... [...] one has to be able to really talk about it, there they get more tough on you than back in the home country when you start to talk about religion, that's my experience. [...], but even from that situation we left after shaking hands and smiling...^{xxxix} (CH 1 L.)

The commanders' experiences from Lebanon are in line with that what the chaplains told. Both said having active chaplains serving with them, and the interaction with the Christian priests and communities was frequent. Their chaplains had visited church services and other events, and at times they had joined in these visits. The commanders recalled having limited encounters with some Shia sheiks themselves, for they were sometimes present during the meetings with the local municipality representatives. However, like the interviewed chaplains, also their chaplains did not manage to network with the Shia sheiks. (CO 1 L; CO 3 L.)

One of the interviewed commanders had made some inquiries about the possibility of his chaplain meeting with the Shia sheiks during his own meetings with the local community leaders. He saw that the current political situation in the region explains the Shia population's reserved stance towards the UNIFIL troops, and this was seen in all the interaction between the peacekeeping personnel and the Shia population, not only between the chaplain and the sheiks. (CO 1 L.) He noted that as his chaplain did not manage to reach the local religious leaders of the Shia communities, it obviously limited their ability to gain additional perspectives to the local Shia villages. An official representative may have a very different understanding of the situation in his village than the other notable actors of the community. (CO 1 L.)

The other commander in turn did not see his chaplain's limited contact with the Shia religious leaders as a problem, for he thought that there was enough interaction with the local Shia communities through other peacekeepers. He did not oppose the idea of the chaplain increasing his involvement with the Shia community as such but estimated that in this case the additional attempts of creating relations could have been counterproductive, for there was

the risk that this kind of endeavour would have been perceived as intelligence gathering or some other negative activity by the locals. (CO 3 L.)

[I]n an operation like the one in Lebanon the big problem is that there are so damn many actors in the region. If you think it from the perspective of the village chief, the village is visited by the UNIFIL Headquarters' personnel, then it is visited by the UNIFIL CIMIC personnel, then by the Italian Brigade's, Multinational Brigade's, Headquarters' personnel and their CIMIC sections. Then the same village is visited by the battalion which is responsible for the area, its jaegar platoons, its company commander [...] and then it is visited by other UN aid agencies, and then by local aid agencies. So, there might be five groups visiting the local chief's office in one day. Just drinking coffee and asking the same questions, that have they seen anything, has it been raining recently, and other things. They will surely get frustrated.^{xi} (CO 3 L.)

Nevertheless, this risk assessment may be questioned, and it may be asked that, after such a long presence of the operation in Lebanon, was it not the time to try building and fostering dialogue between the local religious leaders and communities already (CH 2 L).

The situation of Finnish chaplains engaging local religious leaders during the studied time period looks very different in Afghanistan. As indicated earlier, none of the interviewed chaplains who had served in Afghanistan had encountered local religious leaders, unless one counts the exception of one of them meeting with the two imams of the Afghan National Army a couple of times. Even the theoretical chance to network with local religious leaders seem to have been thin, for during their deployments any unnecessary movement outside the base was considered too high of a security risk (CH 3 A; CH 5 A; CH 6 A). The chaplains could not leave the base and move as freely as, for instance, their colleagues in Lebanon were able to do. 'I think that [it was] partly because of the commander, partly because of the current situation in the operation. [...] ISAF was being shut down.'^{xli} (CH 3 A.) Moreover, earlier there had been times when ISAF chaplains' – both Finnish ones' and others' – encounters with local religious leaders had caused misunderstandings and unrest (CH 5 A; CH 6 A), as well as provided the Taliban possibilities to spread rumours about ISAF engaging in missionary work among locals (CH 5 A; see also Moore 2014, 21). This had caused wider restrictions on RLE/RLL activities, which affected the interviewed chaplain also (CH 5 A; CH 6 A), even if it is possible that chaplains of some other contingents were able to continue pursuing contact with local imams and mullahs (CH 3 A). Generally, religious sensitivities were considered to some extent during their deployments. For example, movement and activities of the troops were reduced during festivities like Nowruz, the Persian New Year, or Eid al-Fitr, the festival which ends the fast of Ramadan, and so forth. (CH 6 A.)

Only one of the interviewed commanders told that his chaplains had visited local religious leaders in Afghanistan, sometimes with him, sometimes without. He did not recall there being any restrictions on such visits during that time but noted that incidents which could have potentially caused additional unrest due to religious feelings being hurt were

considered. He described these visits as courtesy calls, saying that after meeting with any of the locals in person it had been easier to deal with them later with e-mails or phone calls. This had been the case with the religious leaders also, who might have initially frowned upon the ‘infidels’, but eventually got along with the Finns. He told that also his colleagues had perceived that the gestures had a real effect: even if developing friendships was unlikely, at least the interaction became smoother than what it could have been without the visits. (CO 4 A.) Although Chaplain Frode Lagset’s description about the Norwegians’ encounters with the local religious leaders in Maymana earlier in 2007 has a slightly more positive tone, he also emphasised the importance of establishing good relationships above other things (Moore 2014, 216–219). The chaplain of the other commander had not engaged local religious leaders in Afghanistan, except for one courtesy call in an ANA base. The commander saw that the potential of any such visits had been very limited due to the nature of the operation at the time. (CO 2 A.)

What seems to have been common to the operations in both countries is that the level of willingness of the locals, the current security situation, and the nature of each operation have defined Finnish chaplain’s possibilities to interact with the local religious leaders and communities to a great extent. The impact of individual qualities can also be detected: some of the interviewed chaplains and commanders tried to find new ways how to be of use in this field, the others were less active. Despite the possible challenges which may come with the approaches the interviewees’ perceptions about the outcomes of any interaction which had taken place with the locals were mainly positive, and none of the interviewees brought up any examples of things going wrong. Yet, in addition to enhanced networking, cooperation, and trust building with the local populations (Moore 2013, 103, 125), as well as some extra pieces of information the local religious leaders provided (Moore 2013, 79), based on the research data it is difficult to identify any other benefits which may have resulted due to RLE/RLL activities the interviewees told about.

Concerning the troops’ interaction with the locals at a more general level, there is another commonality between the operations which surfaced during the interviews and has not been mentioned earlier. The Finn’s attempts to be mindful of local customs might have at times seemed silly or funny to the locals. For example, both in Lebanon and Afghanistan the troops have been told not to drink or eat publicly during Ramadan in order to show respect. This has led into situations where they have politely declined drinks and food offered by the locals in the period of fasting, which does not necessarily make sense to the locals, who do realise that the Finnish troops consist mainly of non-Muslims. (CO 3 L; CH 5 A.) When a

peacekeeping or crisis management contingent is stationed somewhere for longer periods of time, the locals will also get used to them and their habits (CH 1 L; CH 5 A.)

It must be understood also, that those people who have been dealing with the Westerners, ISAF has been there for 15 to 16 years, they have surely gotten used to [the Westerners], they do know who are on the other side, and that also increases tolerance to it, that these Westerners just do not necessarily understand.^{xlii} (CH 5 A.)

In operations 'cultural sensitivity' easily translates into dos and don'ts, even if more reflective approaches might be required of the personnel (CH 1 L; CO 3 L; CH 5 A).

7. Conclusions

The aim of this study was to introduce and analyse, first, how Finnish military chaplains and commanders perceive the utilisation of Finnish military chaplains 1) as advisors for the command and other personnel in regard to religious elements and their effects in areas of operation and 2) as liaison personnel between Finnish contingents and local religious leaders and communities; and second, what sort of experiences do they have of such endeavours from the Finnish Defence Forces' international operations in Lebanon and Afghanistan since the year of 2010. Simultaneously the study intended to contribute to the broader discussion on religious approaches and actors in conflict resolution, especially in the framework of comprehensive crisis management (CCM). This was done through ten semi-structured interviews with peacekeepers of relevant expertise, including six former military chaplains and four former commanders of Finnish contingents.

It was found that Finnish chaplains' RAA/RA and RLE/RLL endeavours in Lebanon and Afghanistan from 2010 to 2018 have been similar to those of their international counterparts' contributions in various contexts, with the exception of there being no known successes of mediation, facilitation, or reconciliation between estranged religious actors or communities in either of the countries during the studied time period – only some attempts in Lebanon. Although in the interviewees' case it seems that the most significant challenges have had to do with external conditions such as the level of willingness of locals, the security situation at hand, and the mandate and nature of each operation, the effect of individual and organisational issues has been evident: to some extent, lack of full awareness and vision concerning the approaches, insufficient policy and doctrine, limited training and instructions, inadequate planning and preparations, non-existent organisational frameworks, short rotations, and biased attitudes of personnel have all influenced Finnish chaplains' possibilities to serve their contingents in regard to local religious conditions and actors. In other words, these activities have not been conducted in a fully organised manner.

The irregular state of RAA/RA and RLE/RLL in the Finnish Defence Forces has implications to the comprehensiveness of the organisation's conflict resolution efforts: if relevant expertise is not systematically used, opportunities will likely be missed and unnecessary mistakes made. Moreover, in light of theoretical understanding it may be stated that without a broader vision, longer-term planning, and increased commitment with respect to the approaches it will be very difficult, if not impossible, to connect the FDF's operations

to any peacebuilding initiatives through local religious and traditional leaders – a strategy which has proven to be highly useful for Finnish peace mediation efforts.

In the first part of the analysis I focused on the interviewees' perceptions about the topic of the study. This served as a good background for the second part, which had to do with their concrete experiences with RAA/RA and RLE/RLL, for two reasons: First, considering the centrality of chaplains and commanders in RAA/RA and RLE/RLL activities, their attitudes, orientations, and understandings are of importance. These factors, the way they see religious factors in international operations, influence how chaplains perform in this field – or if they will perform at all. Second, due to their practical experiences from operations the interviewees were able to give well-grounded arguments on how things should look like in their opinion, explicating their understandings of the approaches and the possible areas of advancement on a broader scale.

The findings underline the centrality of the image of the chaplain being a peacekeeper who is, mainly and foremostly, concerned of the wellbeing of his own troops. In places like Afghanistan he might join risky convoys to outposts simply to make sure that the troops get their encouragement and waffles. Except for liaison with chaplains of other contingents, the duties outside his own troops, i.e. RAA/RA and RLE/RLL, brought forth a wider range of opinions – although his internal and external tasks need not to be considered mutually exclusive. The question whether Finnish chaplains have the required skills and competences as well as suitable attitudes and orientations for these tasks raised some concerns, both among the interviewed chaplains and commanders. Moreover, even if the chaplain's presence may have some positive symbolical significance for one's own troops, allies, and local populations, and despite the relative freedom he enjoys in the organisation, some interviewees noted that personnel's attitudes towards the chaplain – or religion – may restrain him from working efficiently, both as a religious expert and in general. Also, it is possible that due to lack of awareness he is sometimes simply not understood to be used in RAA/RA and RLE/RLL roles. Considering the previous research, these findings are not surprising and speak for the need for further discussion and clarification about this aspect of the chaplain's duties in international operations both within the Finnish Military Chaplaincy and the FDF.

The research observations indicate that the research participants take religion seriously as a factor in conflicts, even if it was not possible to determine the interviewees' or Finnish troops' level of understanding of or ability to deal with it in international operations. The topic brought forth mixed opinions, and there was no consensus on the chaplain's role in all of this either. Still, the majority of the interviewees' ideas how to use him in this domain, as

well as the presented conceptions concerning the possible advantages and challenges that come with RAA/RA and RLE/RLL, were in line with the previous research, demonstrating the interviewees' familiarity with the topic. However, the chaplain's peacebuilding capacity between local actors received much less attention in comparison to the studies of Moore and Patterson, which might indicate that most of the research participants were not fully aware of the potential of the approaches. This observation is of importance, should CCM be intentionally augmented with religious approaches in the future. On the other hand, the use of interpreters and other personnel in RAA/RA and RLE/RLL was discussed more than in the previous studies, which in turn might be due to the often-thanked high quality of Finnish peacekeepers. It is not only the chaplain who may have religious expertise.

Most of the interviewees saw that there would be room for improvement when it comes to the utilisation of the chaplain's religious expertise. Their remarks about irregularities and plentiful ideas for improvement speak for these perceptions also. Partly the suggestions for advancement had to do with developing the training of chaplains and commanders, including some arguments for the increased integration of their trainings. Yet, mostly the ideas concerned organisational issues, i.e. creating procedures and frameworks for the utilisation of religious expertise within the FDF and its international missions, making it a more systematic activity. Again, the views of the interviewees resembled the descriptions presented in the previous research. There have been similar challenges in other contexts as well.

Particularly interesting is the relatively limited attention which some aspects of RAA/RA and RLE/RLL received, especially because of the risks involved. The challenges related to the chaplain's peacebuilding activities among local religious leaders and communities, his relationship with influence activities and intelligence operations, and his attitude towards missionary work were not much discussed. The chaplain's religious status or gender were also left with little scrutiny. Likewise, this was the case with the topic of harmful reinforcement of power relations or reification of identities which may come with religious approaches. Unfortunately, based on this study it is impossible to say if these questions have received enough attention before Finnish chaplains' RAA/RA and RLE/RLL endeavours, making the FDF's preparedness in this field an even more urgent area of further investigation.

In the second part of the analysis I focused on the tangible experiences the interviewees told about having with RAA/RA and RLE/RLL. By doing so I was able to further clarify the picture of the realities they faced personally during their training and deployments. Moreover, I had the chance to highlight the factors which defined their possibilities to deal with religious

elements and actors in the two countries, and thus reveal the specific circumstances and challenges in the different operational environments.

As for training and preparations, the situation has not been flattering. Based on the research data it may be stated that the Finnish chaplains who have served in Lebanon and Afghanistan between 2010 and 2018 have either received very limited task-specific instructions and training for RAA/RA and RLE/RLL prior to their deployments, or they have not received them at all. Likewise, it looks like their commanders have not been given much guidance how to utilise the chaplains in this domain. When it comes to dealing with religious and cultural issues in operations the interviewed chaplains emphasised the significance of their university studies and some specific military courses they had attended, for the commanders the PDT was of greatest importance. Furthermore, the hand-over-take-over phase had provided some useful insights to the topics, although may be deemed short. Many also relied on their own research and activeness for gaining further understanding.

It was found that with RAA/RA it has been the perceptions concerning the need for the chaplain's advices, not standard procedures, which have defined whether they have been sought after in either of the countries. These perceptions have likely been comprised of factors such as the skills and orientation of the chaplain, the prevailing security situation, the nature of the operation, the personnel's awareness concerning the topic, individuals' attitudes, interpersonal issues, and the availability of other knowledgeable individuals, such as interpreters or experienced peacekeepers. In Lebanon the Finnish troops have been able to interact frequently with the local population, as well as organise chaplain's trips within the AO, which likely increases the need and interest for insights about religious and cultural issues among the personnel. In Afghanistan there has been more interaction with the locals earlier, but during the later phase the contact had been reduced to the minimum, which might explain the lack of interest towards the chaplain's ideas concerning the local ways of life. Moreover, the Finnish peacekeepers who have been deployed to Afghanistan have usually been quite experienced and therefore more familiar with local religious and cultural issues already. Although interpersonal issues or biased attitudes towards the chaplain or religion were not overly highlighted among the experiences of the participants of the study, some parts of their stories, especially from Afghanistan, speak for the possibility of RAA/RA being affected by these factors in the Finnish context as well. In any case, individual qualities have played a role in RAA/RA activities in both countries, for some chaplains have been keener to share their views than others – like some commanders have been more interested in hearing them than others.

According to the research data Finnish chaplains' RLE/RLL activities have been mainly affected by the situational factors which were well identified by the research participants. Primarily the level of willingness of the locals, the prevailing security situation, and the nature and mandate of each operation have defined their chances to interact with the locals. In Lebanon the Christian priests and communities have been very receptive of Finnish chaplains, whereas the Shia sheiks have not shown interest in meeting with them. In Afghanistan, earlier the security situation and later the focus of the mission seem to have restricted Finnish chaplains the most. Still, as with RAA/RA, it is possible to notice the variation caused by individual qualities and organisational issues: some of the interviewed chaplains and commanders have been more active and interested in trying to reach the local religious leaders and communities, others have paid less attention to it. As speculated by some of the research participants, at least in Lebanon it might have been possible to gain additional benefits with the approaches, had they been more systematically utilised.

The study was not designed to determine or measure how Finnish chaplains' RAA/RA and RLE/RLL endeavours have succeeded in either of the countries – that is a task for more extensive research. It may be only concluded that none of the interviewees brought up any examples of great achievements or grave mistakes from the time of their deployments or recent years – i.e. since 2010 – and that those who had first-hand experiences of the approaches were either positive or very positive about them. Many of the interviewees conveyed stories about earlier successes and challenges they had heard from others, some assessing that even if the approaches would not bring about considerable breakthroughs, negligence in this domain could cause missed opportunities and even serious challenges for the troops – considering the events of Maymana presented in the second chapter this estimation seems reasonable. Despite its limitations this study points out that, even if there are issues which need to be addressed should RAA/RA and RLE/RLL wished to be used more efficiently, Finnish chaplains' contributions to the relationship of their troops and the local populations have not been insignificant. After all, throughout the years both in Lebanon and Afghanistan a variety of peacekeepers ranging from commanders to regular troops have received their chaplains' support when dealing with local religious and cultural issues.

In terms of future research, there are two obvious paths to be taken. First, a more thorough investigation of Finnish military chaplains' – and other Finnish peacekeepers' – RAA/RA and RLE/RLL endeavours in international operations would complement the picture of the utilisation of religious expertise within the FDF, help to evaluate how useful these efforts have been, and point into new directions how to develop the approaches at national

level. Internationally the research potential of the field is vast, for one can find indications of chaplains of various nationalities having assumed RAA/RA and RLE/RLL roles during their deployments. The hints include at least Australian (Saunders 2014; Moore 2014, 336), Danish (Vejrup 2018), French (Mielcarek 2014), German (Boczek 2008), South African (Moore 2014, 336), and Swedish (Afghanistanstyrkan s.a.) cases.

Second, one could study other relevant organisations. In Finland NGOs like Finn Church Aid and the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Mission already systematically consider religious conditions and actors in their peacebuilding activities, and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs has strengthened its capacity in this regard during the last few years. Organisations such as Crisis Management Initiative (CMI) or Crisis Management Centre Finland (CMC) in turn could benefit from paying more attention to this theme, if they already have not. Case studies and further examinations would illuminate these organisations' usage of religious expertise, could reveal areas of development, and might even help them to incorporate new approaches into their strategies. Moreover, keeping the principles of CCM in mind, all these research efforts might help improving the interoperability of Finnish government and non-governmental actors in conflict resolution, and especially in its religious domain.

Moreover, finding ways how to provide better training for interreligious and intercultural encounters would prove to be valuable. Like indicated both in some parts of the previous research and the research data itself, increasing peacekeeping and crisis management personnel's capacity to understand and deal with religious and cultural issues both in terms of conflict analysis and interaction has proven to be a challenging task. Previous training programs have not necessarily succeeded in this. Still, it is arguably a vital component of good quality communication and cooperation with local populations, which in turn define, often to a large extent, whether missions will be successful or not (see e.g. Autesserre 2014, 115–157). Therefore, the evaluation of previous training programs and development of more efficient ones is needed. Like Heinonen argues: 'The questions in intercultural, inter-religious-community communication may be unexpected and deeply challenging. They demand deep personal commitment to open-mindedness and flexibility.' (2017, 53.) As for how to foster such qualities in peacekeepers and crisis management personnel, there seems to be shortages in both research and practice.

Finally, I would assess that adopting practical measures for advancing the utilisation of religious expertise within the framework of CCM would not prove to be overly difficult, if this option was decided to be explored. Rather, the biggest challenge in all of this might lie in the attitudes and awareness of those responsible for conflict resolution activities. This has its

implications also for the scholars of RAA/RA and RLE/RLL, who have until now focused on chaplains and their qualities, even if the predispositions and understandings of military officers and other government officials, those who prepare, plan, and lead international operations, are of similar – or even of more – importance. At the end of the day, they are the ones who set the organisational parameters for the utilisation of religious expertise and peacebuilding capabilities within peacekeeping and crisis management forces.¹⁶ Similar challenges likely apply to civilian crisis management and other organisations as well.

Certainly, organisational change can be painfully slow and met with internal resistance (see e.g. Autesserre 2014, 254–257). However, Finland has already experience in pioneering within the religious domain of peace mediation, proving that such transformations are possible. Furthermore, if the goal truly is to reach higher levels of comprehensiveness, these changes are most necessary. As Ari Kerkkänen argues: ‘[T]here is no room for the successful operationalisation of comprehensiveness unless political-strategic decisions are also made, and mandates drafted, that take into account the root causes and complexities of a given conflict situation.’ (Kerkkänen 2015, 45.) Thus, despite also bringing up some practical ideas how to develop the utilisation of religious expertise within the FDF and other conflict resolution actors, this study hopes to serve mainly as an extender of vision and provoker for thought. Although analysing and addressing religious elements of conflicts is far from unproblematic, I am convinced that it is better to try than not to engage them at all.

¹⁶ The organisational obstacles for development presented here are not of new or peculiar kind. As for the advancement of the FDF’s linguistic support, which can be argued having been relatively slow considering the operational environments where Finnish peacekeepers have served, Pekka Snellman poses the following questions: ‘How can military decision-makers’ language awareness be improved? What is the understanding and role of language in the FDF?’ (Snellman 2018, 130.)

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Interview 16.10.2018 – Commander 2, Afghanistan
Interview 17.10.2018 – Chaplain 1, Lebanon
Interview 19.10.2018 – Commander 3, Lebanon
Interview 21.10.2018 – Chaplain 2, Lebanon
Interview 13.11.2018 – Chaplain 3, Afghanistan
Interview 15.11.2018 – Chaplain 4, Lebanon
Interview 22.11.2018 – Chaplain 5, Afghanistan
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Appendixes

Appendix I: Abbreviations and Acronyms

ANA	Afghan National Army
AO	Area of Operation
CA	Comprehensive Approach
CIMIC	Civilian-Military Cooperation
CCM	Comprehensive Crisis Management
CH	Chaplain
CMC	Crisis Management Centre Finland
CMI	Crisis Management Initiative
CO	Commanding Officer / Commander
CR	Conflict Resolution (Field of Study)
DDF	De Facto Force
EU	European Union
FCA	Finn Church Aid
FCR	Force Commander's Reserve
FHT	Field Human Team
FINCENT	Finnish Defence Forces International Centre
FINIRISHBATT	Finnish-Irish Battalion
FDF	Finnish Defence Forces (In Finnish: Puolustusvoimat)
Felm	Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Mission
HUMINT	Human Intelligence
IDF	Israel Defence Forces
INTSUPSOC	International Support Staff Officer's Course
IR	International Relations (Field of Study)
IRISHFINBATT	Irish-Finnish Battalion
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force
KFOR	Kosovo Force
KLE	Key Leader Engagement
LAF	Lebanese Armed Forces
MFA	Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland
MOT	Mobile Observation Team
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NORDEFECO	Nordic Defence Cooperation
OEF	Operation Enduring Freedom
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
PDT	Pre-Deployment Training (In Finnish: rotaatiokoulutus)
PLO	Palestine Liberation Organisation
PRT	Provincial Reconstruction Team
RA	Religious Advicement
RAA	Religious Area Analysis
RLE	Religious Leader Engagement
RLL	Religious Leader Liaison
RS	(Operation) Resolute Support
SLA	South Lebanese Army
UN	United Nations
UNDOF	United Nations Disengagement Observation Force

UNEF I	First United Nations Emergency Force
UNFICYP	United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus
UNIFIL	United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon
UNPROFOR	United Nations Protection Force
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
WISE	Wider Security Network

Appendix II: Definition of Terms

Finnish military chaplains who have served in international peacekeeping and crisis management operations of the Finnish Defence Forces have been – at least predominantly – ordained priests of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland – although priests of the Orthodox Church of Finland are also eligible for the role – and have consisted of both regular staff and reservists.

Religion, which escapes exhaustive definitions like *culture*, is not bound to any single definition or theory of the concept, but is understood, broadly speaking, as the dominant ideas, values, societal norms, and the like perceived to be derived from the sacred. They are considered to be subject to change through the process of reinterpretation and reapplication, colouring individual, communal, and societal human practices, actions, and responses – in many cases similarly as culture does – recognisably but differently depending on the given time and space – this is, context. It is also considered that it is impossible to make clear cut distinctions between religious and cultural elements, for religion may ‘inform’ culture and culture may ‘inform’ religion.

Religious expertise refers to the competence to gather and analyse information about religious – and cultural – elements and actors, to inform and advise others on their specific features and how to take them into account, and to engage with religious leaders, actors, communities, and organisations – with the intention of increasing understanding, improving interaction, and resolving conflicts. *Religious experts*, in turn, are individuals who possess this sort of competence.

The term *local religious leaders*, or simply *religious leaders*, refers to indigenous religious leaders of original parties of conflicts, this is, rabbis, priests, and imams, among others.

In this study *conflict resolution* is used as a wide umbrella term encompassing activities all the way from peace enforcement operations to voluntary processes of reconciliation (see e.g. Ramsbotham & al. 2016, 15–18). Religious approaches to conflict resolution, which are central to this study, are seen as just one ‘tool’ in the ‘toolbox’ of conflict resolution activities (Kriesberg 2007, 35–36).

Crisis management refers to military interventions and operations which may take place when warfighting is still ongoing between original conflicting parties. The mandates of this sort of operations may allow the active use of force and adoption of peace enforcement measures for the purpose of coercing disputant parties to reduce or end violence. (See Liesinen 2018b, 24.)

Peacekeeping consists of military operations which aim to monitor and secure the fulfilment of cease-fires and treaties between original conflicting parties. Usually the use of force in these operations is passive and defensive in nature. (See Liesinen 2018b, 24.)

Peacebuilding is used to refer to various methods (see below) of conflict resolution which do not involve the use of force and address structural and relational issues between conflicting actors and parties.

Mediation refers to a non-violent third-party intervention usually voluntary for original parties of conflicts. It aims at supporting and encouraging the parties to start negotiations and look for solutions in order to manage and resolve their conflict. *Reconciliation* is understood as the

long-term process of transforming an active or potential violent conflict into a state of peaceful and mutually respectful coexistence. (See e.g. Ramsbotham & al. 2016, 35–36.) *Facilitation* is used to refer to organising support for beneficial interaction, dialogue processes, conflict resolution trainings, and the like, by bringing together relevant knowledge, actors, and resources.

In the Finnish context *peacekeeper* is a general term for a member of military personnel, i.e. individual soldiers, non-commissioned officers, officers, and others, both regular staff of the Finnish Defence Forces and reservists, who are participating – or have participated – in military peacekeeping or crisis management operations.

Rotation is a peacekeeper's tour of duty in an operation which usually lasts from some months to half a year. *Pre-Deployment Training* (in Finnish: rotaatiokoulutus), which usually lasts up to six weeks, is the training which prepares the peacekeeper for his duties in an operation.

Appendix III: Interview Protocol in English and Finnish

0. Background Information / Taustatiedot

- Current duties
- Nykyiset tehtävät
- Experience from International Operations
- Kansainväliset tehtävät

1. The Role of the Military Chaplain / Sotilaspapin rooli

- According to your opinion, what is the role of the military chaplain in the Finnish Defence Forces' international operations?
- Mikä on mielestänne sotilaspapin rooli Puolustusvoimien kansainvälisissä operaatioissa?

2. Religious Expertise and the International Operations of the Finnish Defence Forces / Uskonnollinen asiantuntijuus ja Puolustusvoimien kansainväliset operaatiot

- According to your perception, what is the role of religion in modern conflicts?
- Mikä näkemyksenne mukaan on uskonnon rooli nykyajan konflikteissa?
- How religious elements of an area of operation are considered in the international operations of the Finnish Defence Forces?
- Miten toimialueen uskonnolliset elementit huomioidaan Puolustusvoimien kansainvälisissä operaatioissa?
- How would you assess the significance of religious expertise in comparison to other capabilities needed in the international operations of the Finnish Defence Forces?
- Miten suhteuttaisitte uskonnollisen asiantuntijuuden muihin Puolustusvoimien kansainvälisissä operaatioissa tarvittaviin kykyihin?

3. The Military Chaplain's Advisement Activities in Regard to the Religious Elements in the Area of Operations / Sotilaspapin neuvonantotoiminta suhteessa toimialueen uskonnollisiin elementteihin

- In which matters the military chaplain may act as an advisor and to whom?
- Missä asioissa sotilaspappi voi toimia neuvonantajana ja kenelle?
- What sort of experiences do you have of these activities?
- Millaisia kokemuksia teillä on kyseisestä toiminnasta?
- What are the things which either foster or hinder these activities?
- Mitkä asiat mahdollistavat tai rajoittavat kyseistä toimintaa?
- How would you assess the potential of these activities?
- Millaiseksi arvioisitte toiminnan potentiaalin?

4. The Military Chaplain and Engagement of Local Religious Leaders / Sotilaspappi ja paikallisten uskonnollisten johtajien kohtaaminen

- When can the military chaplain be utilised in religious leader engagement?
- Milloin sotilaspappia voi hyödyntää paikallisten uskonnollisten johtajien kohtaajana?
- What sort of experiences do you have of these activities?
- Millaisia kokemuksia teillä on kyseisestä toiminnasta?

- What are the things which either foster or hinder these activities?
- Mitkä asiat mahdollistavat tai rajoittavat kyseistä toimintaa?
- How would you assess the potential of these activities?
- Millaiseksi arvioisitte toiminnan potentiaalin?

5. Religious Expertise, Education, and Training / Uskonnollinen asiantuntijuus ja koulutus

- How has this thematic been present in your own education/training (previous / operation-specific)?
- Miten aihepiiri on näkynyt omassa koulutuksessanne (aiempi / operaatiokohtainen)?
- In your conception, what is the significance of previous education/training in regard to the military chaplain's advisement and religious leader engagement activities?
- Millaiseksi koette aiemman koulutuksen merkityksen suhteessa sotilaspapin neuvonanto- ja paikallisten uskonnollisten johtajien kohtaamistoimintaan?
- How about the significance of the operation-specific training?
- Entä operaatiokohtaisen koulutuksen merkitys?

6. Military Chaplains, Religious Expertise, and the Future International Operations of the Finnish Defence Forces / Sotilaspapit, uskonnollinen asiantuntijuus ja tulevat Puolustusvoimien kansainväliset operaatiot

- How would you assess the potential of utilising the military chaplain as a religious expert from the point of view of future operations?
- Millaiseksi arvioitte sotilaspapin uskonnollisena asiantuntijana hyödyntämisen potentiaalin tulevaisuuden operaatioiden näkökulmasta?

Appendix IV: Interview Quotations in Finnish

ⁱ [M]ikä toi on?

ⁱⁱ [K]un olin siellä, porukasta oli kantahenkilökuntaa yli puolet, ja siel oli paljon semmosia, jotka oli jo monennessa operaatiossa, että ne ei paljon papin opetusta kaivannu. Yhden oppitunnin pidin, lääkärin kanssa [...] Defusingista pidin [...] ja ne tykkäs siitä, vaikka ensin tuli vähän silleen, että mitähän noi pappi ja lääkäri luulee tietävänsä, ni oli ehkä yllättyneitäki siitä, että hei, niillähän onkin jotain semmosta asiantuntemusta, mitä meillä ei oo [...]

ⁱⁱⁱ [S]illon kun nuoria reserviläisiä on vähän ja niin kauan, kun mitään ei satu, niin eihän sitä kriisitukiryhmää niinkun sellasenaan oikeestaan tarvita. Mutta olis voinu tarvita ja jos aattelee vaikka niinkun niitten komentajien näkökulmasta, jotka oli SKJA:ssa siihen aikaan, niin minusta tuntu, että eihän he tarvinnut pappia muuhun kuin a) jouluun, ja b) siltä varalta, että joku kuolee. Minun aikanani ei kukaan onneksi kaatunut.

^{iv} No mun mielestä, se tietysti se pää, ykköstehtävä on omien joukkojen sielunhoito ja se henkinen tuki ja sanottaisko... sotilaspappi on yhdessä, muitten toimijoitten kanssa, ni on keskeinen tässä debriefingissä ja näissä, mut et, se on niiku se ykkönen,

^v Ja paikallisille papin läsnäolo just tässä tapauksessa oli se, et se tarkoittaa, et nää on siis siinä mielessä vakavasti otettavia ihmisiä, koska ne huolehtii myös ihmisen hengellisistä tarpeista, et sillä tavalla niin papin läsnäololla voi olla sille joukolle, paikallisten silmissä, tavallaan meille aavistamaton merkitys. Että siinä mielessä, ni, meidän tehtävä, kunnes jotain vakavampaa läsähtää, on aikailla läsnäoloa, ja sehän nyt on meidän tehtävä muutenkin pappeina, et me läsnäolollamme muistutetaan pyhän läsnäolosta ja se sitten välittyy paikallisille. [...] Mut ylipäänsä se, et... siis mä ajattelen tyylini sitä, että kyllä me pidetään Jumalanpalveluksia tai hartauksia tai paraatien yhteyksissä on pieni rukous tai tämmösiä, niin tota, nii se voi herättää sit omalla tavallaan luottamusta, et ahaa, ne ottaa kuitenkin nää huomioon nää asiat...

^{vi} Ni jos nyt ajatellaan, et meil on pataljoona ulkona, ja meillä ei oo sotilaspappia siellä, niin kyllä paikalliset pitää sitä ihmeellisenä, kristityt, ja muut joukot, esimerkiksi italialaiset tai irlantilaiset, jotka on niiku ns. uskonnollisempia [...] niin kyllähän, jos me todetaan, et ei meil mitään pappia tääl oo, niin kyl siel joku kattoo vähä kieroön, et minkälaista barbaarilaumaa toi on, et tuolta pohjosesta tullu.

^{vii} [S]e riippuu tietysti persoonasta myös, ja omasta papin tausta-ammattitaidosta, mut mä nään myös hänet äärimmäisen tärkeenä konsulttina niin sinne paikalliseen uskonnolliseen yhteisöön [...] ja sanotaan näin, et se ns. konsultin rooli niin se korostuu erityisesti sellaisissa operaatioissa, missä uskonto on niin merkittävässä asemassa niinkun esim. Afganistanissa.

^{viii} Ja myös häiritsee ammattihenkilönä se, että se tietotaito mikä mulla koulutukseni ja ammattini kautta, että se aivan liian usein sidotaan siihen, minkälainen olen tai en ole henkilönä, joka sit taas vuorostaan rakentuu, Luoja yksin tietää mistä. Kunkin upseerin, noh yleensä tässä tapauksessa upseerin, henkilökohtasesta kokemuksesta jostain muista sotilaspapeista tai yleisistä käsityksistä, papin pitää olla tollanen tai tällanen, niin se on kyllä äärimmäisen turhauttavaa siinä kun mietitään asiantuntijuutta, ettei sitten pystytä suhtautumaan samalla luontevuudella kuin suhtaudutaan huollon asiantuntijaan tai lääkäriin

lääkinnänhuollon asiantuntijana, tai juristiin lakiasiantuntijana, niin... Mä luulen, että meillä on joskus vähän vaikeeta erottaa julistustyö ja neuvonanto.

^{ix} [O]sa osaa hyödyntää sen sotilaspapin, osa pitää sotilaspappia taakkana.

^x [P]appi ite näkee oman roolinsa ja tehtävänsä yhdellä tavalla, mut toi, ympärillä olevat ihmiset näkee sen taas toisella tavalla, ja toi, se johtuu tottakai heidän kokemuksistaan ja näkemyksistään, [...] Et joku näkee, et sieltä tulee herra sanansaattaja ja joku näkee sit jotain muuta, et sielt se kuoleman enkeli saapuu, tai mitä kenelläkin, et siihen törmää, jos ei nyt päivittäin niin viikoittain. Et se on niiku tän homman yks haaste myös se, et niiku, et mikä toi on?

^{xi} se ei oo ihan helppo pelikenttä

^{xii} ...käy näin kirkossa ja pyöritellään helminauhaa [...] mutta sit ku menee huonosti, niin se saa suuremman merkityksen ja helminauha pyörii kiivaammin.

^{xiii} [E]n minäkään näkis, että ainakaan useimmissa kansainvälisissä operaatioissa, että konfliktin lähtökohta olisi uskonnollinen, mutta tota, se että, siellä missä tavallisten ihmisten arkielämässä uskonto on hallitsevampi, kun mitä se sekularisoituneissa länsimaissa yleensä on, niin tottakai silloin voi olla hyvin tärkeää, että päästään esim. paikallisten uskonnollisten johtajien kanssa juttuun. Ja tottakai uskonnolliset, niin kuin muutkin juhlat esim., juhla-ajat on semmosia, jollon täytyy olla, se vaan täytyy ottaa huomioon, että siinä voi tietämättömyyttään hölmöyksissään tehdä niinkun paljon hallaa omalle operaatiollensa ja sen pyrkimyksille, jos ei osaa kunnioittaa ihmisten kulttuuria. Että tota. Mä oon monesti verrannut sitä, että jos Suomessa olis ollu brittiarmeijan tukikohtia viimeiset kymmenen vuotta, niin vaikka ne lähtökohtasesti ois meidän hallituksen puolella, elikkä niinkun suurin osa kansasta periaatteessa poliittisesti on samalla puolella kun ne, ei me tykättäis siitä, että täällä on brittiarmeijan tukikohtia, niittenkin ois viisasta pitää aika matalaa profiilia siviiliväestöön nähden pääasissa, ja varsinkin silloin kun meillä on juhla-aika. Et jos ne töräyttäs paikalle vaikka harjotusmielessä vaan jollaki panssarikolonnalla just kun meillä on menossa joku itsenäisyyspäivän seppeleenlasku tai jotain muuta, niin se muistettas. Et jos tällömsille asioille ei osaa olla sensitiivinen, niin siinä toheloi aika raskaasti.

^{xiv} [M]eillä on hyvin tietoa, mutta se, että meillä olisi ehkä mahdollisuus tällä saralla hyödyntää vielä enemmän sitten. Varsinkin silloin kun meillä on puolustusvoimien omia pappeja, mutta miksei myös reserviläisiä, ni toteuttamassa papin tehtävää, niin tota... Hiukan enemmän fokusoimalla heidänkin, kysehän on siitä, että minkälaisia asioita otetaan esille siellä koulutusvaiheessa, mikä on se tavallaan, kuinka hyvin pohjustetaan toimimaan tuola. Niin tota, siinä voisi olla jopa petraamisen paikka. Kyse on kuitenkin ison kokonaisuuden hallinnasta ja jokainen joka siitä jotain ymmärtää niin se on kyllä tervetullutta tuoda siihen jotain lisätietoo.

^{xv} No, sanosin näin, et se riippuu operaatiosta, et se asiantuntijuus, se voi olla joko tuki, ikään kuin siellä taustalla, kun suunnitellaan ja toteutetaan operaatioita, niin sieltä tulee tää niinkun tieto siihen, tai sitten, riippuen tosiaan siitä operaatiosta ja toimialueesta, missä ollaan, niin se voi olla jopa osa sitä operaation rakennetta. Et esim. jos me tiedetään, että kyläpäällikkö on kyläpäällikkö, mut oikeesti sitä kylää johtaa se uskonnollinen johtaja, niin tää pitää tottakai ottaa huomioon, että meidän pitää tietysti osottaa arvostusta sille kyläpäällikölle, mutta meidän

ehkä pitää niinkun miettiä, että lähestytäänkö me sitä haasteen ratkasua sen uskonnollisen johtajan kautta.

^{xvi} Vaikee nähdä, että tulevaisuudessakaan tästä alasta tulis semmonen game changer, [...] mutta se kriittinen tekijä, jolla hävitään, ni se siitä voi tulla. Koska tolla alalla kun saa suksut ristiin jonkun kanssa, niin, tuolla kv operaatiossa niin, on sitten kyse omien joukkojen toiminnasta tai ulkopuolisten tekijöiden toiminnasta, niin sillä voi olla katastrofaaliset merkitykset [...]

^{xvii} Kaikki mikä lisää paikallisten ihmisten keskinäistä ymmärrystä ja hyväksyntää, niin kaikella sillä on potentiaalia ja tilausta, ja voisin jopa ajatella niin, että tällä toiminnalla ois varmaan enemmänkin mahdollisuuksia [...], jos sitä osattais vaan paremmin hyödyntää. Mut se on taas kiinni niistä esimiesasemissa olevista, lähinnä pataljoonan komentajasta, ja itse olen sitä mieltä, että UNIFIL:ssa pitäis olla tällainen pääpappi, joka koordinois sitä toimintaa, koska se voidaan nähdä myös operatiivisena asiana [...]

^{xviii} [E]hkä se ristin kanssa kulkeminen siellä voi herättää vähän epäluottamusta.

^{xix} [H]aluaisin ajatella, et sen pitää olla niiku nimenomaan kuitenkin suunniteltua ja suunnitelmallista, et ei se niiku oo sellane et papiston on kiva tavata paikallisia uskonnollisia johtajia, vaan kyl sen imputin pitäis tulla jostain muualta. Tai ainakin se olis mun mielestä hienoo, et se olis osa jotain isompaa kokonaisuutta.

^{xx} [J]a se on mun mielestä kaiken kaikkiaan kriisinhallinnan ja rauhanturvaamisen iso haaste, että me mennään johonkin täysin erilaiseen kulttuuriin me länsimaiden edustajat, ja me lähdetään niinkun, lähtökohtaisesti dissataan se koko sen maan historiaperimä, traditiot ja kulttuuri ja lähdetään niinkun prässäämään sitä omaamme [...]

^{xxi} [E]t osaa esim. sen, että jos joku sheikki kysyy sitten et oliko [...] Jeesus niin myös Jumalan poika, niin, voi olla viisaskin vastaus, että me kristittyinä ajatellaan näin, mutta en halua siitä lähteä, et siitä ei sillä tavalla en lähde perustelemaan [...]. Sehän on niinko mielenkiintoinen, miten sä vastaat siihen. Nämä on niitä uskonnollisia kysymyksiä, että kristityhän ajattelee näin, mutta [...] tiedän, että se teidän näkökulmasta on vaikkapa järkyttävää. [...] mut se ajatus siitä, et toisaalta niiko ihmiset saa kysyä kaikkea, mutta se on taito sitten sen oman roolin vuoksi niiko osata sitten, että tätä kysymystä ei tarvitse niiko lähteä meidän käsittelemään. Vaan kunnioittaa sitä, vastaa niinko yleisellä tasolla sen enempää, säilyttää vilpittömyys, joo, me ollaan kristittyjä, tiedät varmasti mitä me ajattelemme sen tyypisistä, mutta tulin tapaamaan sen vuoksi, että tässä niiko haluaa arvostaa teitä niinko, antaa tilan teille, tällaisille niinko uskontoja ja yhteiskunnallisina vaikuttajina, ja ehkä tästä ei oo hyvä nyt tässä niiko lähteä...

^{xxii} [T]äs on se mun mielestä ehkä se isoin haaste täs kuviossa, että lähtökohtaisesti mun mielestä sotilaspappia pitää hyödyntää, ja se pitää niinku olla vielä sillä tavalla, että jos mä menen pataljoonan komentajana tapaamaan uskonnollista johtajaa, mä en mee sinne yksin, vaan mulla on se pappi mukana, mutta sit niinkun sanottu, sit tullaan tähän kysymykseen, että miten se jää ikäänkun murretaan, jos mä menenkin naispuoleisen sotilaspapin kans sinne. Et onko se sitten parempi niin, että mä kohtaan sen paikallisen uskonnollisen johtajan, ja se sotilaspappi, nainen on briiffannu mut riittävän hyvin tähän asiaan, ja hän on antanut taustatuen ja taustatiedot, ja sitten ku mä oon sen kohtaamisen tehnyt, niin saman tein istutaan

alas ja mä kerron, ja sit hän ikään kuin analysoi, ja antaa mulle sitte analyysin tulosta seuraavaa kohtaamista varten.

^{xxiii} se on selvästi ollu koulutuksellisesti, että se on papin omaa aktiivisuutta. Että tajuta se rooli ja perehtyä siihen itse.

^{xxiv} [M]ä olin siellä enemmän opettajana, ku oppimassa, mitä liittyy tähä nyt uskontojen kohtaamiseen ja kulttuuriin

^{xxv} [S]ehän vaatii tietysti vaatii teologille tai papilleki ihan yhtä lailla, niikun vaatisi, jos aikoo antaa neuvoa, ni se vaatisi sitä, että sulla on aikaa paneutua ja sä saat sitä paikallista tietoa ja pääset sillä tavalla vähän sisään, et sillä tavalla sun ymmärrys kasvaa, et... [...] toi on itseasiassa aika hyvä asia ottaa huomioon siinä, kun puhutaan papin valmistautumisesta tai papin kouluttamisesta tehtävään, niin tota, ehkä vähän liian ylimalkasesti mennään sillä, että ”sähän oot pappi, sähän tiedät”.

^{xxvi} [J]os sen taustakoulutus on jotenki heikko näihi asioihi, niin, hankala sitä on puristaa rotaatiokoulutukses toisenlaiseks.

^{xxvii} [S]it ehkä se missä pikkusen enemmän nyt jälkikäteen voi sanoo, että asiaa kannattaisi vähä pönkittää on juuri se operaatiokohtainen koulutus etukäteen Suomessa. Hänen niiku asema ja perehtyneisyys siihen ni tota voisi näkyä selkeämmin, jolloin voi olla, siis voi olla, että olisimme keksineet jotakin enemmän. Vaikee mennä sanomaan, mut [...] vielä enemmän olisi voinut olla siellä missä minuakin koulutettiin, jotta hän näkee kaikkia niitä asioita ja tota kuulee... toki oli osassa, mutta ei kaikissa.

^{xxviii} ...puhutaan vähän niinku samaa kieltä...

^{xxix} [M]eil on tälläkin hetkellä firmassa ihan siis niinkun sotilasvirassa olevia pappeja, siis sotilaspappeja, en tarkota nyt näitä pappeja, jotka esim. lähtee reservistä kriisinhallintatehtävään, vaan ihan PV:n pappeja, [...] Meil on hyviä pappeja paljon, mut sit meil on muutamii semmosii pappeja, että, mä tiedän, että jos näistä muutamista papeista joku lähtis johonkin, heittona, et mä olen vaikka pataljoonan komentaja jossain operaatiossa, Afganistanis esim., niin mä en suin surminkaan ottais tällasta pappia mukaan.

^{xxx} [K]un mä järjestin papin retkiäni, ni me käytiin esim. [...] luostarissa tutustumassa sinne, niiku tähän, ja pidettiin siellä ehtoollispalvelus, [...] niin ne on uskonnollisessaki mielessä opetustilaisuuksia rauhanturvaaajalle.

^{xxxi} Afganistanissa, siel ei ollu mitään niinkun joukko-osastolle, eikä sotilaita ees kiinnostanu niinkun mikään vähäi... siis ei oikeestaan mikään. Se pieni opas, mikä tervetuloa ISAF-operaatioon vai mikä se oppaan nimi oli, mikä jaettiin kaikille sotilaille, niin siellä oli semmonen vajaan sivun verran informaatiota islamista ja Afganistanin poliittisesta tilanteesta, ja se oli oikeestaan se ainut yleinen osa, mikä sotilaille jaettiin.

^{xxxii} Niin siinä tilanteessa mä sitte järkkäsin kolme sellasta pientä luentoo viikottaisen puhuttelun yhteyteen, [...] liikuin ruottalaisten kaa ja saksalaisten kaa siellä, niin, tietysti nyt muittenki, siel oli hollantilaisia ja kaikkee muutaki [...] Saksalaisilla oli tällanen, mikäs sen nimi olikaan, cultural officer, tai joku tämmönen, ja hänellä oli aika hyvä tieto siitä, mitä sillä

alueella tapahtu yleisestiki ottaen, ja mä pyysin sit häntä luennoimaan, siitä mitä hän pysty tälle porukalle jakamaan, ja sit mä pyysin yhtä poliisia, siellä oli poliisin EU-missio siellä, operaatio, niin yhtä poliisii sitte siihe kertomaan mitä he tekee siellä yhteistyössä paikallisen poliisin kanssa, ja sit mä kysyin yhtä, joka toimii YK:n jossain näissä avustustoimissa siinä, niin vähän sit kertomaan, et mitä he tekee, ihan vaan antaakseni sille porukalle vähän semmosta, niinkuin silmiä porttien ulkopuolelle, ni sillä ajatuksella mä aattelin, et mä järkkään tämmöset luennot. Tavallaan käytin niitä yhteyksiä, mitä sitte pysty luomaan, ni, yritin käyttää niitä joukon hyväksi.

xxxiii [T]ää religious and cultural affairs -toimisto, niin käy sitten kylissä ja puhuu siitä, mitä ISAF-joukot sillon tekee, ja painotuksella, että ISAF-joukot eivät ole täällä tekemässä lähetystyötä, he ovat täällä tukemassa Afganistanin valtiota, ja kyllä, meidän sotilaille opetetaan islamia, kyllä, he käyvät moskeijassa rukoilemassa perjantaisin. Ja tällä tavalla halutaan myös kumota näitä, tai siis halutaan kumota näitä Talibanin lietsomia huhuja, että yhteistyössä länsi... länsimaisten kanssa yhteistyötä tekevät sotilaat, ni ei ole oikeaoppisia muslimeja, että ne on harhaantunu oikeesta uskosta, ja ISAF on täällä tekemässä ristiretkä.

xxxiv [K]un siellä piti osallistua sen leirin ylläpitotehtäviin ja oltiin sulkemas paikkoja ja pakkaamassa ja muuta tämmöstä näin niin se oli yleinen naurunaihe, että pappi pitää kirjaroviota, [...] minulla oli sellanen valtava vanha öljytynnyri, jossa minä tuntikausia poltin kirjoja ihan siks, että turhaa painolastia turha viedä, ja sitte kartoja siks, että ne operatiivisista syistä piti hävittää, niin se nyt oli papille sopiva tehtävä, kun kaikki oli siellä jotain pakkaamassa tai purkamassa. Et se, uskonnollinen neuvonantaja kuulostaa niin hirveen juhlalliselta, kun aattelee, mitä minä siellä tein, pidin kirjarovioo ja paistoin vohveileita.

xxxv [K]oska ne papit, mitä mä, joiden kaa mä olin tekemisissä, niin heil oli se taustatieto ja ymmärrys islaminuskosta, niin he osas ensin mut briiffata, sillä tavalla, että mä tiesin, että miten esim. käyttäytyy ja toisaalta sit siinä itse tilanteessa he pysty lainausmerkeissä tulkkaamaan mulle niitä juttuja, mitä tää uskonnollinen johtaja puhu, et mitä se niinku tarkoittaa. Et vähä niiku, ikään kuin uskonnollisen slangin kääntämistä ymmärrettäväks kieleks.

xxxvi [N]iiku mä aikasemmin sanoin, mun mielestä se osallistuminen siihen rauhanturvaajan peruspartiointiin, vartiotehtäviin, sitte oltiin välillä 50:llä [...] se saatto olla viikonkin siellä etutukikohdassa kattelemassa, niin sillä oli aika iso merkitys, ei pelkästään sen takia, että se sai sen henkilökohtasen kontaktin siihen paikalliseen väestöön ja siinä niihin tapahtumiin, vaan se oli mukana osana sitä rauhanturvaajajoukkoa, jollon, kun joku kaveri tuli sitten puhumaan partioinnin pitkästyneisyydestä ja kyllästyneisyydestä, [...] niin se kaveri tiesi, et se pappi on ollu viis kertaa samassa partiossa hänen kanssaan, et se tietää mistä hän puhuu, ja se on tärkeä ulottuvuus. [...] että sä puhut niiku siitä asiasta sitte ja kuuntelet ja annat niitä neuvoja ja vinkkejä siinä sielunhoidossa [...], niin se edellyttää sitä, että sä tiedät, mitä se työ on, ja se on niiku hyvin tärkeä siinä...

xxxvii vähän jo meinas ovet avautua

xxxviii [M]ä väitän, että ne resurssit, mul ei ollu pappina resurssia, tarkemmin tulkkien kanssa vielä etsiä mahdollinen shiiajohtaja ja perustella hyvin, kohdata, ehkä olla UNIFIL:in esikuntiin yhteydessä, miten siellä on saatu ne johtajat,

^{xxxix} [M]illai mä sanosin... ainakin meikäläisellä käsitteistöllä ni kyl se on melko konservatiivista, ja siin olet sit aika usein kieli keskellä suuta ku, olen ollu tilanteessa, ku on ollu ihminen, joka on tienny vähä niitä ja näitä, siitä et mikä meininki tääl pohjolassa on, ni, siin on sit kieli keskellä suuta koettanu vastailla, et toi, kysymyksiin kaikist samaa sukupuolta olevien avioliitoist ja naispappeudest ja tällasii, ni toi, et kyl se niiku sillai pitää tuntea se oma kulttuuri ja pitää ymmärtää niiku... [...] siit pitää pystyä keskustelea ihan oikeesti niiku, siellä laitetaan enemmän kovalle ku kotimaassa ku lähettää keskustelea uskonnosta, se on mun kokemus. [...], mut kyl siitäkin ihan kättä puristaen lähdettiin siit tilanteesta pois...

^{xl} [T]uommosessa Libanonin tyyppisessä operaatioissa, niin se iso ongelma on siinä se, että niitä toimijoita on siellä alueella niin perhanasti. Jos sä mietit sen kyläpäällikön kannalta, niin siellä käy sen, siellä käy niiku UNIFIL:in esikunnan porukka, sit siellä käy UNIFIL:in CIMIC porukka, sit siellä käy Italialaisen prikaatin, monikansallisen prikaatin esikunnan väki ja niitten CIMIC ryhmät, sit siellä samassa kylässä käy se aluevastuussa oleva pataljoona, ja sitte sen jääkärijoukkueet, ja se komppanianpäällikkö, [...] ja sitte siellä käy YK:n muut avustusjärjestöt ja sitte paikalliset avustusjärjestötoimijat, ni siellä saattaa käydä sen paikallisen johtajan toimistossa viis ryhmää päivässä. Pelkästään juomassa kahvia ja kysymässä samoja keskusteluja, et onko näkyny mitään, onko satanu viimeaikoina ja muuta, johan ne turhautuu siihe.

^{xli} [M]ä luulen, osittain komentajasta, ja varmaan osittain operaation senhetkisestä luonteesta. [...], ISAF-operaatio oltiin ajamassa alas.

^{xlii} Tietysti ymmärrettävä kans se, että ne ihmiset, jotka on länsimaalaisten kanssa tekemisissä, niin ISAF on ollu siellä nyt jo 15-16 vuotta, niin onhan ne tottunu, että kylhän ne tietää, ketä niitten vastapuolella on, ja siinä sit kasvattaa myös toleranssii siihen, että nää nyt ei vaan ymmärrä nää länsimaalaiset välttämättä